MINUTES OF EVIDENCE

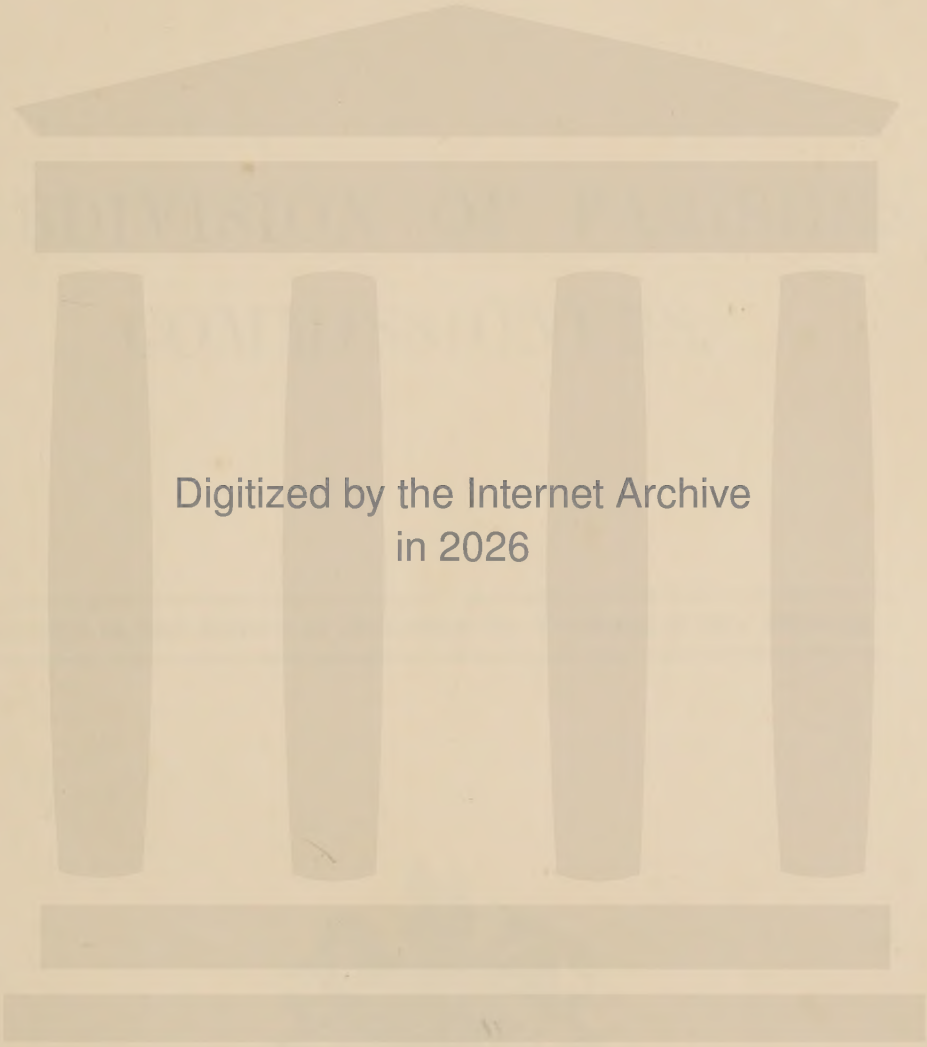
TAKEN BEFORE THE

SUBDIVISION OF PARISHES COMMISSIONERS.

Presented to both Houses of Parliament by Command of Her Majesty.

LONDON:
PRINTED BY GEORGE EDWARD EYRE AND WILLIAM SPOTTISWOODE,
PRINTERS TO THE QUEEN'S MOST EXCELLENT MAJESTY.
FOR HER MAJESTY'S STATIONERY OFFICE.

1854.



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MINUTES OF EVIDENCE

TAKEN BEFORE

HER MAJESTY'S COMMISSIONERS.

Tuesday, 24th April 1849.

The ARCHBISHOP OF YORK in the Chair.

GEORGE JELF, Esq. examined.

George Jelf Esq.

24th April 1849.

1. YOU are secretary to the Commissioners for building additional churches?—I am.

2. How long have you held that office?—Twenty years.

3. Have you a list of the parishes which have been subdivided by the Church Commissioners?—I have.

4. Will you have the goodness to put it in?—(*The same was delivered in.*)

5. Will that list exhibit the different kinds of subdivisions which have taken place into Distinct Parishes, District Parishes, Ecclesiastical Districts, Consolidated Chapelries, and Chapelries and Districts under the Patronage Act?—It will up to the 9th of March in this year. I should explain, however, as to the last-named districts, under the Private Patronage Act, that this list only comprises those districts assigned by the Church Commissioners, and does not include the districts under that Act assigned by the bishops.

6. Will you be so good as to state whether the Church Commissioners, during the time you have acted as their secretary, have acted upon the principle of encouraging subdivision of parishes wherever it was found to be practicable?—Certainly.

7. Will you state the principal obstacles which have impeded them in the execution of their wish to carry that division still further than it has been carried; taking first the legal obstacles, and then the practical obstacles of a moral kind?—I should say that, generally speaking, the Church Building Acts at present afford very great facilities for the division and subdivision of parishes; but that some important consequences arising therefrom are very ill provided for by the present state of the law. I do not know whether it is desired by the Commissioners that I should state the different modes of division under which those parishes may be separated; if so I am ready to do so.

8. Will you have the goodness to state the different modes, beginning with the complete division?—There are at present four kinds of division for ecclesiastical purposes under the Church Building Acts, namely, the division into distinct and separate Parishes, District Parishes, District Chapelries, and Consolidated Chapelries. I should state also that there is another kind of district, which is technically called in the Church Commission Office a Particular District, assigned under the 1 & 2 Will. IV. cap. 38, with respect to churches built and endowed by private individuals, the patronage of which may be specially declared under that Act.

9. Would you not include also the case of a contingent district under Lord Harrowby's Act?—There is no particular power granted by the 5 Geo. IV. cap. 103., commonly called Lord Harrowby's Act, for assigning a district under that Act. If a district be assigned at all to a church built under that Act, it can only be a district under former Church Building Acts. I speak, however, with some uncertainty as to the provisions of that Act, because it is one which the Church Commissioners can be but rarely called on to deal with to any extent; their powers under that Act are very limited. If it is the pleasure of the Commissioners I will state the different clauses under which those kinds of divisions may be effected. A distinct and separate parish may be formed under the sixteenth section of 58 Geo. 3, cap. 45.; a district parish under the twenty-first section of the same Act; a district chapelry under the sixteenth section of 59 Geo. III. cap. 134., and the third section of 2 & 3 Vict. cap. 49. A consolidated chapelry is now formable under the ninth section of 8 & 9 Vict. cap. 70. All these divisions or districts must include within them at the time of such division a consecrated church; they are effected by an order in council on a representation to Her Majesty in council by the Church Commissioners under

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their common seal, which document all the necessary consenting parties sign and seal. I will now state shortly how those divisions or districts differ from each other. A distinct and separate parish is the same as a district parish, except that in the former case the tithes, glebe, and other permanent endowments are apportioned between the original parish and the new parish. That complete and separate division can only be effected with the consent of the bishop and the patron. The minister of the church of the new parish is only a stipendiary curate under the incumbent until after the avoidance of the mother church, and the division does not take effect until such avoidance. The incumbent of the new parish is then rector or vicar, as the case may be, according to the character of the original parish church.

10. Unless with consent?—It may be doubted whether the power of resigning the new parish by the incumbent of the original parish applies to the case of a distinct and separate parish. I believe, however, that it has been done, but there is a doubt about it. In the case of a district parish the tithes and the permanent endowments are not touched, and the district parish can be formed with the consent alone of the bishop of the diocese. The incumbent of a district parish is a perpetual curate after the division has taken complete effect; until that he is a licensed stipendiary curate. In the case of a district parish a power is given by the fifteenth section of 8 & 9 Vict. cap. 70. to the incumbent of the original parish to resign the new district parish, and then the division comes into complete operation. In both those cases under the restrictions contained in the first of the Church Building Acts, the twenty-eighth section of 58 Geo. III. cap. 45., none of the offices of the Church except, perhaps, burials, and then only burials by the licensed stipendiary curate of the original parish, can be performed until after the measure has come into complete operation, the object of which I should imagine was to preserve the existing rights of the incumbents of the original parishes. In both these cases of division there are the same provisions, as far as the law can be ascertained as to the repairs of those churches. It was formerly questioned whether the repairs of the church of a distinct and separate parish were regulated by the provisions of the seventieth and seventy-first sections of the 58 Geo. III. cap. 45.; but in a case decided by Dr. Lushington in 1841 in the Consistory Court of London,—Varty and Mopsey *v.* Nunn,—he after great deliberation, gave it as his opinion that, although the first part of the seventieth section did not contain the words "distinct and separate parish," yet if a district parish was subject to the provisions of those two clauses, à fortiori a distinct and separate parish, which was a more complete division still, ought to be, and was, according to his judgment, subject to those provisions. There are the same provisions as to the appointment of churchwardens, and vesting the patronage of the new parish church in the patron of the living, with this exception, that in the case of the church of a distinct and separate parish the licence of the minister serving such church before the avoidance of the mother church is void by such resignation, and the patron has thereupon the right immediately to present. In the case of a district parish the licence is not void unless revoked by the bishop, and the patron's right to present does not arise in such a case until the next avoidance. A district chapelry, which is that most resorted to by the Church Commissioners, can be assigned with the consent of the bishop of the diocese. The consent of the incumbent is not by law necessary. Wherever the right of nomination to the church of the district chapelry was before the district chapelry was formed, that right is not affected by the assignment of the district. There is a power given to the Church Commissioners, with the consent of the bishop, to decide as to whether marriages, baptisms, churchings, or burials should be performed or not in the church of the district chapelry; and there is a power also for those parties to determine whether any and what proportion of the fees or dues arising from the performance of those offices shall belong to the minister of the district chapelry. The policy and practice of the Church Commissioners have been to order all the offices of the Church to be performed in those district chapelries. Special reasons may sometimes, but rarely, occur, which have induced them not to order all the offices of the Church to be performed there. By the seventeenth section of 8 & 9 Vict. cap. 70., which applies to district chapelries formed before and to be performed after the passing of that Act, the minister of the church becomes at once perpetual curate, capable of holding tithes and endowments, and he has within his district an exclusive cure of souls, and is not subject to the control or superintendence of the incumbent of the mother church.

11. That is a comparatively recent provision?—Yes.

12. You were understood to say that of late years it has been the policy or practice of the Commissioners, where no strong reasons to the contrary existed, to direct the performance of all the offices of the Church in those district chapelries?—Certainly.

13. Has it not been, as far as you can judge from the communications which have taken place with the bishops of the different dioceses, also their policy, whenever it could be done, to encourage the formation of districts and the performance of all the offices in the churches of those districts?—Yes.

14. The obstacles which have arisen have not been, generally speaking, on the part of the Commissioners or of the bishops?—Certainly not. I will now, with the leave of the Commissioners, proceed. In the case of a district chapelry there is the power of appointing church-

churchwardens, one to be nominated by the incumbent of the district chapelry and the other by the inhabitants of the district chapelry in vestry assembled.

15. Will you state to what the powers of those churchwardens are limited?—They are limited to the receipt of the pew rents if any pew rents have been fixed, and to the preservation of order in the congregation, and ministerial matters of that kind. But these churchwardens have no power whatever as to church rates, which they are studiously excluded from touching by the eighth section of 8 and 9 Vict. cap. 70.

16. Is it considered to be the duty of the churchwardens to be sworn in, and to attend the visitations?—As far as my means of knowledge go, I should say it was their duty to attend. I do not, however, know whether swearing in is now necessary; I believe not. In the case of a consolidated chapelry, which is formed out of the contiguous parts of different parishes, the nomination to the church belongs according to the agreement which may be made between the patrons of the respective parishes out of which the consolidated chapelry is formed. The consents necessary are those of the bishop and of the patrons of those respective parishes both to the formation of the consolidated chapelry as well as to the arrangement as to the patronage. All the offices of the church are, by virtue of an order in council, which may issue upon a representation to the Queen from the Church Commissioners as before stated, immediately performable or continue to be performed. The minister is the incumbent of the church, and of that district, and has within it the exclusive cure of souls. The fees, after the next avoidance of the respective parish churches out of which the district was formed, belong to the incumbent of such consolidated chapelry, but the incumbents of these parishes may and often do relinquish these fees at once. I will now refer to the case of a "particular" district, as it is called in the Act, the 1 & 2 Will. IV., cap. 38., assignable to churches built and endowed by private individuals, in which the patronage may be diverted from the ordinary course of law, namely, the incumbent of the parish, and vested under that Act in the persons building and endowing those churches, and their heirs, assigns, nominees, or in trustees, and so on. There is one peculiar distinction between that class of church and the other churches or districts to which the churches belong, which is this, that those churches may be built adversely to the wishes and without the consents of the patrons and incumbents of the parishes in which they are situate, upon notice given to these parties in order that they may have an opportunity of preferring any objections they may entertain to the measure to the Church Commissioners or to the bishop of the diocese in those cases which come within his jurisdiction. The question of jurisdiction under that Act is often a very nice one.

17. Or that they may have an opportunity if they please of building a church themselves?—That is the provision, and it was no doubt meant to be, but it is not, a practical provision; those districts may be assigned by the bishop alone if the case belongs to him, or by the Commissioners if it is within their jurisdiction, with the consent of the bishop.

18. Under the 1 & 2 Will. IV. cap. 38., is not power granted in some case to the bishop, and in other cases to the Commissioners, to assign those particular districts?—If upon the facts of the case it should appear that the bishop has jurisdiction to deal with the case, and allow the church to be built, and to grant the patronage, the assignment of the district rests with him. If the facts of the case disclose that he has not, but that the Church Commissioners have jurisdiction, then they deal with the case (if they think proper), subject to the sanction of the bishop, and vest the patronage as proposed, or according to the arrangement made, and afterwards assign the district. By the tenth section of 2 & 3 Vict. cap. 49. the minister of the church becomes perpetual curate of that church, and has within the district exclusive cure of souls.

19. What is it which determines whether the bishop has jurisdiction or whether the Commissioners have jurisdiction. Is it not that there are certain conditions prescribed by the Act, a compliance with which vests the jurisdiction of the bishop, but a non-compliance with some of which leaves the case to be dealt with by the Commissioners?—Under the second section of the 1 & 2 Will. IV. cap. 38., and first section of 1 & 2 Vict. cap. 107. under certain circumstances as to the amount of population and church accommodation and distance from any consecrated church, coupled also with certain conditions with respect to endowment and provision in a certain way of a repair fund which are particularly and minutely specified in those Acts, the bishop may, if he think proper, declare the patronage; that is, if certain circumstances as to population, church accommodation, distance, endowment, and repair fund all concur, it has been considered and acted upon as law that in that case the bishop has jurisdiction, and the Commissioners cannot interfere. Then comes the fifth section, the language of which is "that in all other cases not herein-" before provided for, the Commissioners may deal with the case upon being satisfied with " respect to the endowment, the repair fund, and so on." In short they have a very large discretion, whilst the bishops have a very limited discretion. It is sometimes a matter of inconvenient nicety to determine whether the jurisdiction belongs to the bishop or to the Commissioners, and the question is very easily subject to misapprehension. These nice distinctions on this subject as to jurisdiction appear to me unnecessary and vexatious obstacles to the building and endowment of new churches by private parties, and are founded on no intelligible principle. It would be far better, if I may be allowed to express an opinion, that there should be but one tribunal to decide cases as to questions may arise as to the necessity or policy of allowing private parties to build and endow new churches.

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(with districts to be given to them) adversely to the wishes and interests of the incumbent or patron. Supposing, however, the Church Commissioners deal with the case originally, and declare the patronage in the bishop, they then proceed to assign the district, after giving notices to the patrons and incumbents of the parish or parishes to be affected, embodying a variety of details which are set out in the sixth and seventh sections of 1 & 2 Will. IV. cap. 38. In these cases the Commissioners require generally, indeed almost always, an endowment of at least 1,000*l.*, and a repair fund also secured in the funds or on real property.

20. Are the Commissioners or is the bishop bound in all cases to assign a district, or may not they in some cases refrain from assigning a district?—In point of law they are entitled to exercise a discretion, but practically as far as the Church Commissioners go, they are strongly impressed with the necessity of assigning districts in those cases under the 1 & 2 Will. IV. cap. 38.

21. But they have the power to refrain?—They have, certainly.

22. You have stated that certain clauses in one of the Acts regulate the question of church rates in distinct and separate parishes and in district parishes; what is the law with respect to church rates as to district chapelries?—If the Commissioners will allow me I will read an extract from some notes which were made some years ago upon this subject, which embody more clearly the points which I conceive to be the law upon this intricate subject than I could now state them verbally.

23. The law has not been altered since?—No.

24. What is the document that you hold in your hand?—It is observations which I drew up respecting a consolidation of the Church Acts. The subject of church rates was then looked into with a great deal of care.

25. Have the difficulties which have arisen from the inconsistent or seemingly inconsistent provisions of the sixteen Church Acts been great obstacles in the way of the Commissioners carrying out the plan of dividing parishes?—Yes; but from practical working and a careful comparison of the different provisions in those Acts the Church Commissioners themselves are able to carry on the system of parochial extension and improvement, because the main provisions for that object already exist in those Acts, but it is a general and well-founded complaint that the laws by which they are governed are scattered and diffuse, and on many points obscure and unintelligible to the public. I am speaking now not merely of the division of parishes, but of the general defects in those Acts of Parliament.

26. Have any measures been taken or attempted to be taken by the Commissioners at any time with a view to obviate the difficulty by consolidating the different Acts of Parliament, and bringing them into a consistent and intelligible shape?—In the year 1842 I was requested by the Church Commissioners to prepare a draft for the consolidation into one Act of the then existing Church Acts, which I did, and found it an extremely laborious task. Dr. Lushington was then so good as to go over the draft with me paragraph by paragraph with a view to amend and correct it. That occupied many months. After that was done a Committee of the Church Commissioners, on whom I attended, went through the whole draft of the Bill clause by clause, and revised it. Upon that it was sent back to Dr. Lushington and myself to reconsider. The whole Bill clause by clause was then carefully gone into again by us, and the result laid again before a committee of the Church Commissioners who again took it up, and the result was the production of one consolidating Bill.

27. How many clauses does it contain?—211. It was reduced, I think, from nearly 300 to 211 by referring to some jury clauses and other matters of form to be found in the former Acts; it was a laborious and toilsome work for all engaged in it. The draft was sent in 1843 to Sir James Graham, then Home Secretary, by his Grace the then Archbishop of Canterbury, Chairman of the Board of Church Commissioners, with the expression of a hope that the Government would consent to introduce the Bill into the House of Commons.

28. The Government would not undertake it, not from any objection to the principle of the Bill, but from the extreme trouble it would involve, and the unwillingness of any member of the Government to undertake the charge of it?—Yes, I so understood it.

29. Were not the objects of that Bill in the first place to make the whole law respecting church building consistent; secondly, to increase the power of the Commissioners as to the subdivision of parishes; thirdly, to remove many of the restrictions under which they are placed by the existing law; and, generally, not to impose any new burden upon the parishioners, but rather to relieve them from the apprehension of some to which you think they are exposed by the existing state of the law?—I should say those were, no doubt, the general scope and objects of the Bill. There was an endeavour to settle upon some clear and equitable principle the question of church rates.

30. Was not the general principle insisted upon, as far as it could be, that each division of a parish should repair its own church and no other?—That it should repair its own church and no other, except a church situate or which might be situate within that division or district. One of the objects of the consolidated Bill was to abolish select vestries formed under the Church Building Acts, which were found to work extremely ill.

31. Is

31. Is there not a provision in the Church Building Acts that every church built by the Commissioners shall be repaired by the parish in which it is situated, if no other provision is made for its repair?—I think the effect of the last part of the seventieth section of the 58 Geo. III. is to establish the liability of the parish to repair a new church, which the Commissioners have built, or to which they have contributed funds to build, so long as that church is a church or rather chapel of ease to the parish church. I am not aware of that liability being made dependent on a separate fund, or provision being made for its repair. I should state that since that consolidating bill was framed many inconvenient restrictions on carrying into immediate effect the ecclesiastical parochial system have been removed by various clauses which have been introduced into various Church Acts.

32. Has much difficulty been experienced by the Church Commissioners, in cases of subdividing parishes, from the vested interests of incumbents and patrons?—I should say especially, with reference to district chapelries, which are those most resorted to, that occasionally practical difficulties do occur, which are perhaps unavoidable from the very nature of the subject. Occasionally incumbents are found to object in point of principle to the division of parishes. Differences of opinion often arise as to the most eligible boundaries. Loss of fees to the incumbents of the original parishes is another practical obstacle to the assignment of those districts. It requires care, time, and attention to detail, and also an impartial tribunal, in which the clergy put confidence, to settle and adjust the various points which arise in improving and extending the parochial system.

33. Have the Church Building Commissioners any funds applicable to compensation for such loss of fees?—By the thirty-second section of the 58 Geo. III. cap. 145. compensation may be made to the incumbent of the original parish, in the case only of district parishes, for loss of fees, but, (independent of the fact that the Church Commissioners have not funds applicable to that object, as the remnant of their funds is not the least commensurate with the urgent claims on them for contribution to build new churches,) the clause itself is not good sense, because by the twenty-eighth section of the 58 Geo. III. cap. 45. none of the offices (as I think I have stated before), except perhaps burials, can be performed in those new district churches until the avoidance of the original parish church, and therefore when that clause was passed the question of compensation could not arise. In no instance, so far as I can find, has compensation ever been made by the Church Commissioners to the incumbent of the original parish for loss of fees. The power of compensation applies only to the district parishes, and does not apply to district chapelries, which are those most resorted to. Nor, supposing the clause could be properly brought into operation, is there any available fund in the hands of the Church Commissioners, as I have before stated, out of which compensation could be made. With respect to district chapelries I should say that, as far as my own observation and experience may go, the district chapelries at present, generally speaking, work well, with two exceptions. I do not, of course, mean to say that, if possible, a further endowment for many of these district chapelries would not be most desirable; I am speaking only of the practical working of the present system of parochial division under the Church Acts. The first exception is, that the Church Commissioners are often obliged, in the case of populous and extensive parishes, with a heavy cure of souls and small endowment, to protect the interests of the existing incumbents by reserving the fees to them. That has been considered always an alternative which they were very unwilling to adopt where they could fairly help it. The Church Commissioners have felt that such incumbents had a moral and equitable claim that their existing interests should not be prejudiced by the loss, without their consent, of fees which they could so ill afford to lose without compensation: and in many instances they had felt the necessity of reserving these fees in perpetuity in favour of the original parish church. In such cases the Church Commissioners find a choice of difficulties; and it is, I think, one of the great practical difficulties in the way of bringing into immediate and full operation, without injustice, the advantages of parochial division of labour.

34. How would you propose to remove that difficulty?—I should say that it can only be done by the liberality of Parliament. I know of no other fund out of which provision could be made for this most desirable object.

35. Has it not been found that of late years incumbents have manifested less disinclination to the subdivision of their parishes, and a greater readiness to relinquish a portion of the fees?—Undoubtedly.

36. And that in fact in that respect the difficulties of the Church Commissioners are less than they were at one time?—No doubt they are. I have made out a table, which may perhaps be useful to the Commissioners, showing the cases in which, with reference to the districts which have been assigned by the Church Commissioners, a classification has been made of the cases in detail in which there has been a reservation of the fees; and, if the Commissioners think proper, I will put in that paper. It is a statement showing the number of chapelry districts already assigned by Her Majesty's Commissioners for building new churches up to ninth of March last, and also the total of each of the several classes of appropriation or reservation of the fees received at the churches or chapels to which such districts have been assigned. (*The same was delivered in.*) The second practical difficulty is as to the church-rate question. What appears to be wanted is some clear specific principle to be laid down by Act of Parliament by which the churches of those

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district chapelries, and any future churches to be built in those districts, shall be repaired. With those exceptions, it would seem to me that the existing powers and provisions as to the forming and working out the plan in detail of parochial ecclesiastical division, are, with respect to most parishes, sufficient for the purpose. I have forgotten to state that there are, by several Church Building Acts recently passed, powers to divide and subdivide, and subdivide again, distinct and separate parishes, district parishes, and district chapelries, and districts under the Patronage Act, and to include for ecclesiastical purposes extra-parochial places. Pains have been taken to give every facility to adapt these matters to the changing circumstances of the time, according to the wants of the population and the erection of new churches. Those clauses are the twelfth section of the 1 & 2 Vict. cap. 107., the first section of the 3 & 4 Vict. cap 60., and the second section of the 11 & 12 Vict. cap. 37. There is also a power to alter the boundaries of all those different kinds of divisions to which I have before adverted, given by various clauses, which perhaps I may mention. The twenty-third section of the 58 Geo. III. is the first power; the sixth section of the 3 & 4 Vict. cap. 45. is an enlargement of that power ; the 8 & 9 Vict. cap 70. is an additional enlargement of the last-named section. The 11 & 12 Vict. cap. 37., passed in the last session of Parliament, applies to the alteration of the boundaries of a particular district under the Patronage Act, so that there are at present existing under the Church Acts ample powers for the ecclesiastical division and subdivision of parishes. There is also at present under the various Church Acts a power of appointing church-wardens for all those cases.

37. And also in chapelries which have new districts assigned to them?—Yes ; and also with respect to churches without districts, in which the site has been conveyed to the Church Commissioners, and so far placed under their protection or jurisdiction.

38. You say that under the Church Acts there are adequate powers for all purposes of division and subdivision. Can you give the Commissioners any estimate of the expense to which any would be exposed in attempting to bring those Acts into operation?—All those divisions, with the exception of Patronage districts, are effected by a representation to the Queen in Council, if the necessary parties are consenting. That is sent to the Council Office, and if the Order in Council passes, upon its being registered and gazetted it becomes law, and the expense falls not upon any parties anxious for the measure, but is defrayed out of the expenses of the Church Commissioners' office, and by the treasury with respect to the fees going to the law officers of the Crown for the consultations, and so on.

39. Then why is it that those Acts are not adequate for the purpose, and why are there so many applications for local Acts? why, for instance, was Dr. Hook obliged to come to Parliament for a subdivision of the parish of Leeds?—I should answer that question in this way. There are a great variety of interests and of circumstances occasionally occurring with respect to ecclesiastical matters in a large parish like that of Leeds. Some particular provisions may be required in that class of cases which the present state of the law will not reach ; but those cases are not of frequent occurrence, and when they do occur are best met by local Acts. I do not think it would be practicable by a general Act to deal with peculiar and specific cases, in which objects extrinsic from parochial division are sought to be carried out. I may mention as an illustration the cases of the parish of Leeds, of the parish of Doddington, and the parish of Winwick.

40. So far your present powers are not adequate to the exigencies?—They are not adequate for the particular and extrinsic objects which it may be desirable to effect with reference to the particular circumstances of a particular town or a particular parish. But those are exceptions.

41. Has it not been found that the local Acts, particularly the local Acts passed before the Church Building Acts came into operation, have been one source of very great difficulty in the way of the Church Commissioners when they came to deal with those large parishes which had Acts of their own?—It has fallen to my lot to meet constantly with local Acts which were passed thirty or forty years ago, and I have found in them a complete impediment to the improvement of the parochial system. The subject was not then understood, and the spirit of those Acts was to restrict instead of to extend the parochial system. There are some other Acts of more recent date. I should instance the case of Saint Pancras, which is a strong illustration of what mischief a local Act may effect, which was taken up upon particular circumstances attending that parish, and which was passed without a due inquiry into the real legal, moral, and religious effect of those enactments.

42. Will you explain how that local Act operates?—With respect to the case of Saint Pancras, I should say that the policy and principle of that Act, and its leading defect, is, that it is impossible, according to the opinion of the law officers of the Crown, properly to divide that great parish upon a really sound parochial system. The opinion of the law officers of the Crown (speaking from general recollection) with reference to that Act has been, that although the Church Commissioners might assign, by metes and bounds, districts, there is no power either of ordering the offices of the church to be performed, or of allotting the fees which the Church Commissioners think ought to go, generally speaking, to the ministers of the churches where the duty is performed.

43. Without

43. Without repealing the local Act?—Without repealing the local Act, which has been attempted in vain in Parliament. I conceive that the present state of the law under that local Act forms an insuperable obstacle to the providing properly for the cure of souls. The prohibition applies to the performance of any of the offices of the Church, and to the different clergymen of the churches of that great parish, properly and legally being allowed, except as a matter of convention with the incumbent, to visit the sick or to perform any pastoral duties. I took great pains in the Bill that was produced before Parliament to try to remedy the difficulties.

44. Will you put in a copy of your consolidated Bill, or a breviate of it?—I will do so, if required; but I should state that this Bill is not applicable to the present state of the law, because a great many of what the Church Commissioners have thought improvements have been introduced into various Church Building Acts since this Bill was sent to Sir James Graham; therefore this Bill does not correctly represent the present state of the law. If I may be allowed, instead, I will read some short observations attached to the breviate on the difficulties which are still involved at present in the execution of the Church Building Acts. "The complication and contradiction of the present Church Building Acts may be in some degree accounted for, by the three first of them not having distinguished the special and temporary provisions for the erection out of the parliamentary grant of additional churches from the clauses which were intended to give general powers to the Commissioners in parishes where no additional church had been or was intended to be built by them. These general powers were given in vague and obscure language, and were mixed up with the special and temporary powers of the Commission; and when of late years church extension, including not merely the erection of churches, but an improved pastoral superintendence, and a better division of clerical duties, called these before comparatively unexercised powers into operation, the confusion and contradiction of the Acts became apparent. Numerous and difficult questions arose as to rights of patronage, performance of the office of the church, appropriation of ecclesiastical fees, repairs of churches, &c. On many very important points the Acts were silent, on others obscure and contradictory, and not only have the Commissioners been impeded in the performance of their extensive duties, but their proceedings have left parishes and parties in a state of doubt and uncertainty as to the legal consequences resulting from them. The object of the present Consolidation Bill has been to place this important and difficult branch of church extension on some clear footing. Various enactments scattered through numerous Acts of Parliament on the same subject have been consolidated, and, as far as possible, arranged in the natural order of the matter treated of; doubtful and vague expressions (involving often contradictions) have been avoided, and many new clauses necessary or expedient for carrying into effect church extension on the parochial system have been introduced." Since that, as before stated considerable improvement has taken place by the different Acts of Parliament which have been passed with reference to some of the more pressing questions of church extension.

45. Can you state what portion of the difficulties which existed at the time that that Bill was prepared have been removed?—I shall be prepared on a subsequent day to state that.

46. In subdividing districts do you put the incumbent of the new district precisely in the position of the old incumbent; for example, supposing the incumbent is a trustee of a school in the parish, does not the original incumbent remain the trustee of the school, and not the new one?—A distinction has been generally made all through the Church Acts to separate ecclesiastical from civil questions. It appears to me that that would be a civil question. The trust deed possibly would or should have provided for that contingency.

47. You have said that the Church Building Commissioners have ample power to constitute distinct and separate parishes. Now of course you use that language in a limited sense; not in the popular sense; because there is no power anywhere out of Parliament to make, in the old English sense, a distinct and separate parish at all?—The policy of the whole of the Church Building Act goes to this, and the restrictions also go to the same effect, that the civil questions do not profess to be touched by the Church Building Acts. I do not say that that has been strictly carried out, but it is the general policy of the Church Acts.

48. Would not you think it a great advantage if there were a power to constitute distinct and separate parishes, in the full sense of the word, for all purposes?—That would be a question of enormous extent. My observation applies only to ecclesiastical matters.

49. Is not the question of church rate properly an ecclesiastical one?—In the strict sense of the word, perhaps, (though not in the popular sense,) I should hardly say it was, because it is a rate which justices of the peace may by Act of Parliament enforce under certain circumstances; but I do not give a confident opinion upon that point. I wish to state, though the general policy of the Church Act is not to interfere with civil questions, that such has not been uniformly adhered to; for instance, there is a power, under the twenty second section of the 8 & 9 Vict. cap. 70., to the Lord Chancellor to apportion between the remaining part of the parish and the divisions of that parish the charitable bequests and gifts, and also the debts and charges. That power formerly resided with the Church Commissioners; but it was found that they were not a competent tribunal to deal with the question, and had no power to send for persons, papers, and records, or to examine parties on

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on oath, and therefore this power was taken from them, and lodged in the Court of Chancery.

50. If there were a power anywhere to divide parishes for all ecclesiastical purposes, and if church rate is an ecclesiastical matter, would not the result of the church rate question virtually be settled without any further legislation?—What is wanted is that Parliament should settle the question of church rates. It is not properly settled at present; that is to say, church extension on the parochial system by the erection of new churches and the division of parishes require that the apportionment of the liability to repair churches should be altered on an equitable principle, so as to be adapted to the improved parochial system.

51. If by any means you could get the power to divide parishes for all purposes, so that you could divide the people into bodies of reasonable extent, instead of into mobs, would not the result be that there would be no church rate question? Have you ever turned your attention to that?—No. I always considered the question of church rate to be a matter separate from the civil question. You will often find that the parishes are such for ecclesiastical purposes, and there are different parishes united for civil purposes; the civil parish (if I may so call it) and the ecclesiastical parish are not necessarily co-extensive; but as far as respects church rates, whether that be a civil or ecclesiastical question, the effect of making the new district liable only to the repairs of its own church or churches would be, that, there being a limited number to vote on the question by the very formation of the district, and the restriction of the liability to that district, the evils you advert to, of mobs being collected on church rate questions, would thereby be avoided.

52. You are understood to say, that generally, and under ordinary circumstances, where local Acts do not interfere, you consider the present law sufficient for the subdivision of parishes if the question of church rates could be satisfactorily settled?—I should say that to work the thing out fairly you want two questions settled; namely, the question of church rates, and the power to meet in open parish vestries on that question, and also the being able at once to hand over the church and the district to the incumbent of the district, without the inconveniences attending the reservation of the fees.

53. But the Church Commissioners have the power of doing that if they have the means?—Yes. I meant the practical difficulty; the want of pecuniary means for compensation.

54. That can be done without the consent of the incumbent?—Yes; but in all those cases, whenever a division is applied for, queries are sent to the applicant for the signatures of the incumbent of the parish and the minister of the church of the proposed district. Those queries I now have with me, and if it is the pleasure of the Commissioners I will put them in. The policy of the Church Building Commissioners has been always, if they could, to obtain the concurrence of the incumbent to the division of the parish, though his consent is not required by law, and rarely to act without his consent, thinking it but right that he should have an opportunity of considering carefully in detail all the questions which may arise, and which may affect not only his interests but the interests of the parish to be affected by the measure. The law does not require in district chapelries the consent of the incumbent, but practically it seldom occurs that the Church Commissioners are willing to go very adversely to his wishes, unless there are unreasonable objections which they think ought not to be entertained. The consent of the bishop is necessary, and he is always a consenting party to the representation to the Queen in Council.

55. Are there not many cases in which the Commissioners overrule the objections of the incumbent by the recommendation of the bishop, and assign a district even where he is not a consenting party?—No doubt they do, after due consideration. I am speaking of the opportunities given to the incumbent to consider the whole question; but it not unfrequently happens that they think his objections unreasonable, and they then proceed as they may do, without his consent.

56. With respect to local Acts, you are aware that the parishes of Saint George and Saint Thomas in Westminster were formed out of Saint Martin's Parish. Those were done by local Acts, were they not?—Yes, I believe St. George's was. I am not aware of any parish of St Thomas Westminster.

57. Those are complete parochial divisions, Saint George's and Saint Thomas's being entirely distinct from Saint Martin's?—I am not well acquainted with the provisions on that subject with respect to those parishes; but there is a power to do that for ecclesiastical purposes under the present Church Acts, with the necessary consents. Those parishes, I take it, are civilly separated.

58. You were asked whether there were not two classes of difficulties which prevented the Commissioners under the present Acts from dividing parishes, the one being church rates, and the other being the question of fees; are there not two other classes of difficulties the one being the case where there are local Acts, and the other where the temporalities have been divided, in either of which cases, under the present Acts of Parliament, the Commissioners have the power of dividing the parish?—There is a power now given with reference to a distinct and separate parish to allot and apportion the temporalities and permanent endowments between the original parish and the new parish. It may be done in two ways; you may give the tithes arising within the new parish to the incumbent of that

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new parish, or you may, under the eighth section of the 59 Geo. III., effect a rent-charge on the tithe lands and permanent endowments of the original parish, amounting to such a sum as may be deemed competent, in favour of the new parish, without regard to the locality of the endowment.

59. Has any case come before the Church Commissioners of the latter kind, in which that has been done?—Yes; I will take a case which I recollect immediately, and that is the case of Birmingham, another is that of Barking in Essex, another, Saint Luke's Chelsea, and other cases.

60. Did the case of Loughborough come before the Church Commissioners?—Yes; all the glebe lands, tithes, and so on, arising and accruing within the district and separate parish of Emanuel in the parish of Loughborough were settled upon that new parish.

61. You were understood to say that you considered the church rate question an ecclesiastical matter, not a civil matter?—I so understand it.

62. Then you would say that there is at present no power to divide a parish into distinct and separate parishes for ecclesiastical purposes if there is not the power of dividing it for the purposes of church rates?—It may be done.

63. Do you mean that no new parish which has been constituted by the Church Commissioners has raised any church rates?—I confine my observation to distinct and separate parishes and district parishes, and there the law is, that in both classes of cases the new parish shall raise rates within its own parish or district, and also be liable, for twenty years after the consecration of the new church, to contribute to the repair of the old parish church. That was decided in the case of Hackney, in the Consistory Court of London, by Dr. Lushington.

64. How are the repairs of churches in consolidated chapelry districts provided for?—There the law is very defective, because the exclusive cure of souls within the district is given to the incumbent, which is therefore a separate benefice, yet the present state of the law is considered to be that the parish in which the church was situate remains (if so before) solely liable to the repairs of the church, notwithstanding its disconnection from it.

65. You mean that the old parish is liable for the repairs of the new church?—Yes; liable for the repairs of the church of that consolidated district.

66. With regard to the next head, "Consolidated Chapelries," how are the repairs there provided for?—They are the same thing. They are called "Consolidated Chapelries" in the first part of the Church Building Acts, and they are called "Consolidated Districts" in the more recent Clauses, which go to amend former provisions.

67. Then coming to "Chapelry Districts," which are the next head, how are they provided for as to repairs?—As far as the law can be settled upon the question, it has been held (though not ever, I believe, legally adjudged,) that wherever the liability to the repairs of the church of that district chapelry resided before the assignment of the district, that liability is not altered by the assignment of that district, it being sometimes a moot question where the liability of the repair to the church rests.

68. Was there any liability to repair the new church before the district was assigned?—I should state, with great submission, that that would depend upon the circumstances under which the new church was built. It has been held that churches built by means of funds placed by Parliament at the disposal of the Church Commissioners are liable to be repaired by the parish at large for whose use those churches were built, and that not merely by virtue of the common law, but by virtue of the last two lines in the seventieth section of the 58 Geo. III.

69. Will you be so good as to read the words?—Perhaps I may just read the whole of the clause. "And be it further enacted, that the repairs of all such district churches or chapels shall be made by the districts to which they respectively belong by rates to be raised within the district, in like manner as in case of repairs of churches by parishes; and every such district shall be deemed in law a separate and distinct parish for that purpose." Now the words "distinct and separate parish" are not mentioned in the first part of that clause; but by the decision of Dr. Lushington, in the Hackney case, it was adjudged, that a distinct and separate parish was governed, as to repairs, by the same law as was laid down in that section as to district parishes. The last words of the 70th section run thus: "and the repairs of all chapels not made district churches shall be made by the parish in or for which the chapels shall be built." Now it has been held that that cannot apply to the case of a district chapelry, because the power to form a district chapelry was not then in existence, the power to form those district chapelries being only given by a subsequent Act of Parliament, the 59th of Geo. III. cap. 144.

70. That clause speaks only of the repairs of churches. Is it held to authorize a common church rate for all purposes?—Under the word "repairs" it has been held by civilians that it included the ordinary expenses of divine service.

71. Then in all cases the repairs of the churches are considered to be provided for in some way or other?—Yes, they are provided for, but very imperfectly. I am speaking of churches to which the Commissioners have made grants of money.

72. Are you aware of any cases in which district churches and chapelries have raised rates for their own purposes?—There are many.

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72. With regard to the several cases you have mentioned, the repairs are provided for, not by distinct rates upon the new district created, but by rates upon the whole parish?—Yes; that is considered to be the case as to chapelry districts, supposing the whole parish to be liable for the repairs of the church of the chapelry district before the assignment of that district. Chapels which have been built by the Church Commissioners, or by means of funds at their disposal, should be, by virtue of the latter words of the seventieth section of the 58 Geo. III. cap. 45., as before stated, if not by virtue of the common law, repaired by the parish for whose use they were built.

73. Should not you consider it a great improvement if the districts were parted off for church rate purposes, instead of being thrown upon the common fund?—The greatest improvement that could be effected in the parochial system.

74. How would the parish church in such a case be maintained?—The repairs would then fall on the remaining part of the original parish.

75. Would not that parish, generally speaking, be a very poor one around the old church?—That would depend upon circumstances.

Adjourned to Tuesday next, Two o'clock.

Tuesday, 1st May 1849.

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LORD ASHLEY, M.P., in the Chair.

GEORGE JELF, Esquire, further examined.

76. THE Commissioners are desirous of asking you a few questions about the patronage of the different districts. Among the divisions which you describe under the Church Building Acts you spoke of consolidated chapelries; what are those?—Consolidated chapelries and consolidated districts are the same thing. In former Acts of Parliament the term used was "consolidated chapelry." In the Act 8 & 9 Vict. cap. 70. the expression was "consolidated district."

77. It is under the same circumstances?—There are in the last-named Act some slight variations and improvements in carrying the measure into execution.

78. The first division is into distinct and separate parishes. The patronage there is vested in the patron of the parish which is so divided?—It is, after the avoidance of the parish church.

79. Can you state why the patronage is vested in the patron of the parish?—I do not pretend to be able exactly to define the principle, because I know nothing of the circumstances under which the act was framed; but I take the principle to be this, that inasmuch as the tithes of the parish are affected by the division, the patron, who has a direct interest in the original parish, ought to have the patronage of the new church, endowed with part of the tithes of that original parish.

80. He to a certain extent has endowed the separate and independent parish, and having given that endowment he is entitled to the patronage?—I conceive what I have just submitted to be the principle on which Parliament proceeded.

81. Is there any provision of the law by which the patronage, in the case of separate and distinct parishes, may be otherwise assigned?—No; not under the Church Building Acts.

82. The next division is that of "district parishes," constituted under the twenty-first section of the first Act, and which are liable to rates for the mother church for twenty years. The right to appoint to the churches of those districts is also in the patron of the parish from which they are taken?—Yes; but with this exception, that by a recent Act of Parliament the licence of the stipendiary curate serving the district church is not revoked by the avoidance of the parish church, but his licence remains in force unless revoked by the bishop. Therefore the effect of that is to postpone pro hac vice the right of the patron to present to any district parish church.

83. You mean, that till an avoidance takes place, or a resignation, the district parishes remain in fact stipendiary curacies?—Yes.

84. Then a curate that is so appointed on an avoidance succeeds to the benefice if he has not been displaced by his licence being revoked by the bishop; that is so, is not it?—I am not prepared to say that it is exactly that; but it is something very like it. The status of the stipendiary curate under those circumstances is not defined by Act of Parliament. Whether he is still a licensed stipendiary curate, or whether he is perpetual curate, the law has not defined. One of the clauses which I took the liberty of introducing into one of the Church Acts was intended to remedy that defect, by providing that the bishop within a certain time, if at all, should exercise the right of revocation and that if he

he did not provoke the license the licensed stipendiary minister should become, without any fresh institution or induction, the perpetual curate of the district parish.

85. But as the law now stands he does in fact, when an avoidance takes place, become the perpetual curate of that parish?—I am not prepared to say that. I do not know what he is; whether he is still licensed stipendiary curate, or whether he is perpetual curate, because the law has not provided for it.

86. Still it is true that the patron's exercise of the patronage is suspended?—Yes.

87. The patron cannot make another appointment?—Pro hac vice he cannot.

88. But supposing the licence of the curate to be revoked, or supposing the curate to be removed in any way, then the patron of the parish from which the district parish is formed presents, and has the patronage in perpetuity?—Yes.

89. The incumbent of the remaining part of the parish is injured as to his emoluments in no way excepting as to his fees?—Just so.

90. Take for instance the great parish of Mary-le-bone. Supposing that great parish were divided into twenty district parishes, would the patronage in those twenty district parishes be vested in the patron of Mary-le-bone?—If that is taken as an A B C case it would. I think there are some local Acts affecting Mary-le-bone; but putting those out of the question, no doubt upon the avoidance of the parish church, or the incumbent's resignation of the district parish church, the patronage, subject to the claim of the curate of the district parish church to succeed as before stated, would go to the patron of the parish of Mary-le-bone.

91. Although those distinct parishes might have been endowed from the public funds, either the funds at the disposal of the Ecclesiastical Commissioners, or funds of a similar nature?—I do not apprehend that that endowment would at all affect the right of the patron to present to it.

92. Then the result would be this, that the patron, having originally patronage to the extent of 2,000*l.* a year, would, under the present operation of the Act, have patronage to the extent of 20,000*l.* a year, if there was so much endowment?—Whatever the value arising from the new churches of those district parishes might be, that value would go to the patron of the living upon the first avoidance of the parish or resignation by the incumbent of the district parish.

93. In perpetuity?—Yes; if he were patron in fee of the original parish.

94. The parish of Lambeth had four district parishes formed out of it. The four incumbents of those district parishes were appointed by the then rector, Dr. D'Oyly, and during his incumbency he had the appointment?—Yes.

95. When Dr. D'Oyly died, then the operation of the Act became complete, and though appointed as curates by Dr. D'Oyly, they virtually became the incumbents of those district parishes, did they not?—I am obliged to make a distinction in order to be accurate. I believe a question arose as to what was the status of those gentlemen upon the death of Dr. D'Oyly. There was a wish on the part of the patron of the living to continue them, and it was a question of form how they had best be continued; whether they had better come in under the Act of Parliament which still continued their licence, or whether it would be advisable for the archbishop to revoke their licence, and to make fresh presentatiosn with respect to those four benefices.

96. What in point of fact was done?—It did not come within my department, and therefore I cannot state confidently; but I know that I was consulted upon it, and I could give no distinct advice in consequence of the defect of the law.

97. During Dr. D'Oyly's incumbency he had the appoinment of those clergymen?—Yes.

98. Since his death the archbishop, as patron of the living of Lambeth, has unquestionably the patronage of those four district parishes on the next avoidance?—Yes; those district parishes were endowed out of the pew-rents and fees.

99. Supposing an individual came forward, and offered to endow largely those four district parishes in Lambeth; would not the patronage still remain in the Archbishop of Canterbury, as the patron of the living?—I conceive so.

100. Could the archbishop divest himself of it if he were so minded?—I doubt very much whether he could in the present state of the law under the Church Building Acts. It could be done, perhaps, under the Bounty Board.

101. That is, supposing the Bounty Board gave something?—I think it has been held that an arrangement as to a different course of patronage can be done without a contribution by the Bounty Board.

102. You do not mean to say that there is anything peculiar in these district parishes as to that point of which we have just been speaking, or that the Bounty Board can do anything with regard to those district parishes, as to patronage, which they could not do in the case of any other benefice?—No. The inconvenience of the restriction as to the surrender of rights of patronage, to which I have just adverted, was so much felt, that in the Bill for consolidating these Acts a clause to this effect was introduced in it. The

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clause was this:—"That it shall be lawful for all bodies politic, corporate, or collegiate, "corporations aggregate or sole, tenants for life or in tail, husbands, guardians, trustees, "and feoffees in trust, committees, executors, and administrators, and all other persons "and trustees whomsoever, not only for or on behalf of cestuique trusts, whether issue, "infants unborn, lunatics, idiots, femmes covert, or other person or persons, and for all "femmes covert who are or shall be possessed of or entitled to or interested in their "own right, and for every other person whomsoever who is or shall be possessed of or "entitled to or interested in any right of patronage or presentation or appointment of "any spiritual person to any benefice or donative, or to any church, or for the trustees "of any endowments or emoluments for the use of any church, or the incumbent thereof, "or the spiritual person serving the same, to surrender, with or without valuable consi- "deration, any such rate of patronage, presentation, or appointment, endowments, or "emoluments, or to enter into or make any agreement relating thereto, with or without "valuable consideration, whether such surrender or agreement be made to or in favour "of, or entered into with or by any lay or spiritual person, or corporation aggregate or "sole, provided that such surrender or agreement be sanctioned by the said Commis- "sioners, under their common seal, and by the bishop of the diocese under his hand and "seal, and every body and person or making such surrender or agreement is hereby "indemnified in all respects for so doing, anything contained in any Act of Parliament "or in any deed or any trust relating thereto, or any law, to the contrary notwithstanding; "provided nevertheless, that such guardians, trustees, feoffees in trust, committees, "executors, or administrators, and all other trustees or other persons not having any "beneficial interest in any such rate of patronage, presentation, or appointment, or in "any such endowments or emoluments, shall not render the same without valuable "consideration, or make any such agreement without like valuable consideration, if such "agreement operates to injure the rights and interests of any cestuique trusts, or any body "or person beneficially interested in the promises; and when a valuable consideration "shall be paid, the monies to arise from the produce thereof shall be in all respects paid "and applied as monies to arise from the sale of any lands by incapacitated persons are "herein-before directed to be paid and applied."

103. What control could be exercised in a similar case when the archbishop himself or the bishop himself was the patron?—The control in such case would be that of the Church Commissioners. I am speaking now with reference to the present state of the law.

104. In the parish of Bethnal Green eight out of ten of the district parishes out of that large parish were handed over by the College of Brazennose to the Bishop of London?—The patronage of four of these churches was assigned to the see of London by the patrons, Brazenose College, under the fifteenth section of the 3 Geo. IV. cap. 72., under the direction of the Commissioners, and with consents of the bishop and incumbent of the parish. The patronage was therefore surrendered by the patrons to the see of London, in order, as the Act requires, that the Church Commissioners might be better enabled to assign a district. I see no use in that restriction as now imposed on the surrender of the patronage of a church. I think that the power of surrender, with proper restrictions and under proper control, ought to exist without reference to the question of a district.

105. The third mode of dividing parishes is into "consolidated districts." Consolidated districts are formed out of one or more contiguous parishes or extra-parochial places?—Yes.

106. The patronage of those consolidated districts so formed is vested in such body or bodies, person or persons, as the patrons of the parishes out of which the consolidated chapelry is formed may agree on?—Yes; with the consent of the bishop and the Church Commissioners. A representation to the Queen in Council is framed, setting forth the expediency of uniting those contiguous parts of parishes into consolidated districts, and that the patrons have agreed that the patronage shall belong as agreed on, setting it forth, and that the Church Commissioners and bishop consent to the measure. The bishop, the Commissioners, and the patrons sign that representation, which is sent to the Council Office, and if an Order of Council issues thereon it becomes the law of the land.

107. The patronage may be conferred upon a person or persons?—Yes.

108. Is there any limitation as to the number of persons to whom it may be given under that Act?—The representation to the Queen in Council must state to what corporate body, aggregate or sole, or person, their or his successors, heirs, and assigns, the right of presentation and appointment to the church of such consolidated chapelry is proposed to belong. That is the ninth section of the 8 & 9 Vict. cap. 70. Practically it seldom or never happens that the right of nomination is proposed to be thus vested in more than two or three persons. Generally speaking, it is in the patron of one of the parishes or in the bishop.

109. There is in fact no restriction as to the patronage as respects the patrons of the parishes out of which the consolidated district is taken; they may vest it in whom they like?—Yes. With the consent of the bishop and by direction of the Church Commissioners, and an Order in Council ratifying the arrangement. I should have before stated to the Commissioners, what many of them are no doubt well aware of, that with respect to all these divisions and districts under the Church Building Acts, the existence of a consecrated

church

church within that division or district is presupposed; there must be a consecrated church within the limits of the proposed district before the district can be formed.

110. The next mode of division is into what are called "Chapelry Districts." Are not those districts by far the most numerous?—By far.

111. The patronage of those chapelry districts is always vested in the incumbent of the parish out of which the chapelry district is taken, is not it?—Unless otherwise legally vested elsewhere.

112. What do you mean by "unless otherwise legally vested elsewhere?"—It may happen that by some agreement between the patron, the bishop, and the incumbent the patronage of the church to which a district chapelry is to be assigned may be vested otherwise than in the incumbent, or it may be by local Act of Parliament, or in some other way which it is difficult beforehand to define. But the general principle is that the incumbent of the mother church of the parish out of which the district chapelry was formed presents to the church of that district chapelry, as he is entitled ordinarily speaking by law to do. By the seventeenth section of the 8th and 9th Vict. the minister of this district chapelry becomes, by the assignment of that district, a perpetual curate, with power to hold lands and tithes, and so on, and has exclusive cure of souls within that district, without being subject to the control or interference of the incumbent of the mother church. That is an important and recent alteration in the law; formerly he was a licensed stipendiary curate.

113. Does he become so without the avoidance of the mother church?—The language of the Act is, "that anything in the herein-before recited Acts, or any of them to the con- "trary notwithstanding, the church of any district chapelry formed or to be hereafter "formed under the provisions of the recited Acts, although such church may not have been "augmented by the Governors of the Bounty of Queen Anne, and also any church now or "hereafter to be augmented by any Order of Her Majesty in Council ratifying any scheme "of the Ecclesiastical Commissioners for England, and with a district chapelry assigned "thereto, shall be and is hereby declared to be a perpetual curacy and benefice, and the "license thereto shall operate in the same manner as institution to any benefice, and the "minister duly nominated and licensed thereto and his successors shall not be a stipendiary "curate, but shall be and be esteemed in law to be a perpetual curate, and body politic "and corporate, with perpetual succession, and he and his successors may receive, take, and "hold, to himself and themselves, all such lands, tithes, and rent-charges, as shall be granted "unto or purchased for him or them by the Ecclesiastical Commissioners for England, or "otherwise," &c. &c.

114. Does it require any endowment?—That is, generally speaking, one of the inquiries which the Church Commissioners make before they assign a district chapelry. They inquire whether any endowment has been or is likely to be secured for the church; and the bishop, I believe, generally looks into that point.

115. Supposing there should be no endowment, does the minister become the perpetual curate?—He becomes, by the Act and section before mentioned, the perpetual curate of the district chapelry.

116. A district is never assigned till the church has been consecrated?—No; under the Church Building Acts the church must be first consecrated.

117. And it is generally supposed that the bishop will not consecrate the church except it be endowed?—I believe so.

118. There is no legal obligation upon that point?—No; it is a usual matter of inquiry and precaution on the part of the bishop.

119. It is in the discretion of the bishop, if he thinks fit, to consecrate it without endowment under this Act?—There is nothing in the Church Building Acts prohibiting the consecration for want of an endowment.

120. Is there practically any difference between chapelries and district parishes, except as to the patronage of the churches?—There is a difference as to patronage, church rates, reservations, and of fees and performance of the offices of the Church; in the case of a district parish church the division does not take effect until after the avoidance of the mother church or the resignation by the incumbent of the original parish of the church of the district parish.

121. Supposing a district parish and a chapelry to be actually constituted, is there any difference practically between the two, except that in the one case the patron of the mother church is the patron of the living, and there is a separate church rate, and in the other case every thing remains as it was before?—With the exceptions I before adverted to I do not conceive there is any difference.

122. Has not the incumbent or vicar of the parish a right of interference in a district chapelry which he has not in a district parish?—No; he is expressly excluded, by the seventeenth section of the 8 & 9 Vict. from any interference in a district chapelry.

123. When a district chapelry is formed by the Commissioners, by whom alone it can be formed, does not it rest with the Commissioners to say what offices of the Church shall be performed there, and whether all or what portion of the fees shall go to the minister of the

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chapelry district:—Yes; and therefore as far as that goes, (which I ought to have corrected before) there is that additional difference. There is a power of reserving the fees in the case of a district chapelry, which power does not exist with respect to a district church.

124. Before the consecration of a church belonging to a district chapelry may not the patron, the incumbent of the mother church, and the bishop agree to vest the patronage of that district chapelry in some other person, under the recent provision of the law?—I suppose the question refers to the twenty-third section of 8 & 9 Vict. cap. 70., coupled with the fourth section of 11 & 12 Vict. cap. 37. I apprehend that the power of making that agreement applies to any church before or during or after its erection, and prior to consecration, and that it is competent for the Church Building Commissioners, after consecration, to assign a district to that church The effect of that clause has been, I am told, beneficial, as it has enabled the parties to come to an agreement beforehand as to the patronage, the bishop taking care that the arrangement as to patronage is one which under all the circumstances is right and proper. The effect of this clause has been, I am informed, already to encourage church building: and, under proper regulation, I consider it an useful aid to the erection of new churches.

125. That arrangement as to the patronage in the usual course, under that clause, must take place before the consecration, must not it?—Yes; that is, the agreement must be signed before the consecration.

126. Is there not another mode of changing the course of the patronage; in this way,—that in the case of a chapel which is a consecrated chapel, and which has existed for some time without a district, before the assignment of a district, the patronage may be changed in somewhat like manner?—Yes; under the fifteenth section of the 3 Geo. 4. cap. 72., before referred to; but that clause, as I have before stated, is clogged with an inconvenient restriction as to the subsequent assignment of a district.

127. Have you in point of fact known that clause acted upon much?—Yes.

128. For what consideration generally has the patronage been so changed?—Generally speaking, so far as my memory will allow me to speak, I should say that it has been in consequence of some endowment which has been either legally obtained or promised, though not legally secured. Independently of the endowment, the incumbents I think rather sometimes prefer that patronage should be exercised by the bishop of the diocese; and the surrender therefore very often is made to him under the Act.

129. Of their own right?—Yes.

130. Is it not evident that the object of the law throughout has been to make the person who will give an endowment the patron to the living as far as possible, but that that has not been carried fully out?—The principle has been fully recognized, and there are various ways in which it can be done.

131. The fifth mode of dividing parishes (exclusive of Sir Robert Peel's Act) is that under the 1 & 2 Will. 4 cap. 38., commonly called the Patronage Act. In that case the person endowing, according to the terms laid down in that Act, has the patronage, has he not?—He may have it if the bishop or Commissioners, as the case may be, decide that he should have it.

132. Must they not do so?—No; there is a discretion. If you refer to the fifth section of the 1 & 2 Will. 4 cap. 38., under which the Commissioners derive that power, you will find it is said that it shall be lawful for the said Commissioners, with the consent of the bishop of the diocese, if under all the circumstances it shall appear to them fit and proper so to do, to declare the patronage.

133. Did you ever know a case where the bishop refused to declare it?—I cannot speak confidently upon that subject. I am not informed as to that point.

134. Supposing the person who claims the patronage to have complied with the terms of the Act in building a church and endowing it, what do you take it would be the effect if the bishop were to refuse so to declare?—I will take the case first of the bishop. In that case there is also a discretionary power given to him, as in the case of the Church Commissioners.

135. Under the Patronage Act certain cases belong to the Commissioners and certain to the bishop?—Yes.

136. You have stated that the bishop has the power of withholding the patronage. Have the Commissioners the like power in the cases which come under them?—Yes.

137. Does the Act say so?—It does.

138. Then with regard to either of those cases, supposing they should decline assigning the patronage; what do you take it would be the effect?—Supposing the bishop or the Commissioners broke faith—(for it would be a breach of faith)—and the patronage not being specially declared, according to the requisitions of the Act, by the one party or the other, under that Act the church being once consecrated, the right of nomination vested by the common law in the incumbent of the parish to present to that church would arise and would defeat the objects of the parties who had built and endowed the church. By the eleventh section of 1 & 2 Vict. cap. 107., however, after the patronage has been specially declared parties are precluded from questioning the validity of the proceedings under

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under the Patronage Act on this subject after three years have elapsed from the time the patronage has been so declared. I will, however, take a case well known,—the case of Mill Hill, Mr. Wilberforce's church,—where that actually happened. There was a failure as to reserving, under the second section of 1 & 2 Will. 4 cap 38., a sufficient sum for repairs according to the requisitions of that clause, in consequence of which the incumbent, who was an adverse party, disputed the right of Mr. Wilberforce to present, and tried the question, the church having been consecrated, and after all the deeds had been settled; and it was adjudged in that instance that the declaration of patronage was void, and that the common law right of Mr. Williams, the incumbent of Hendon, to present immediately arose.

139. But that is not the case supposed in the question. In the case you have stated the person claiming the patronage failed to comply with the terms of the Act, and therefore Mr. Williams came in by the common law right as incumbent; but the question supposes the case of a person who complies with the terms of the Act as to the repair fund, the endowment fund, and everything else, and yet that the bishop sees fit to refuse to assign the patronage. What do you think the result would be then? Who would get the patronage?—Upon the consecration of the church the common law right of the incumbent to present would, I conceive, in such case arise.

140. Is there no provision by the Act for making any previous agreement or understanding with the party offering to build and endow the church effectual to secure to him the patronage upon his doing so, and complying with all the requisitions of the Act?—No, I am supposing now the case of an adverse patron or adverse incumbent, and that the parties, having fulfilled all the conditions, find that the Commissioners or the bishop fail them at the last moment. I should not like to give a decided opinion upon that point; but it seems to me that the parties so treated would have some remedy at law or in equity If the bishop or the Commissioners said, "Upon certain terms being complied with I will "give you the patronage," and they then failed to do so, the parties against whom that breach of faith had been committed I apprehend would have a remedy.

141. If the patronage is declared to be in the person endowing and complying with the terms of the Act, he may either take it himself or it may be vested in trustees?—Yes.

142. But those trustees must be limited to five?—Yes; unless it pass by descent to coparceners, or by the custom of gavelkind, or shall be conveyed by will or deed to more than five children, grandchildren, nephews, or nieces of the grantor or devisor.

143. It may descend to more?—Yes; under the circumstances before mentioned.

144. Now we come to Sir Robert Peel's Act. The patronage of churches built under Sir Robert Peel's Act is, under ordinary circumstances, in the Crown and the bishop alternately, is it not?—I have so understood.

CHARLES KNIGHT MURRAY, ESQ., a Member of the Commission, examined.

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145. You are treasurer and secretary to the Ecclesiastical Commissioners for England?—I am.

146. The patronage of churches built under Sir Robert Peel's Act is in the hands of the Crown and the bishop alternately, is not it?—I should rather put it in another shape. I think the principle of the Act was to invite contributions from all quarters towards church extension, and therefore the first clause in the Act which relates to patronage proceeds upon that principle, and enables the Commissioners, in the case of any district constituted under the Act, to assign the patronage of that district, or of the new parish when a church shall be consecrated, and the district thereby becomes a new parish, to any person or body of persons making such a contribution as will satisfy the Commissioners as to the amount of patronage to be assigned. It enables the Commissioners to assign either a single presentation, or more than one presentation, or the whole patronage. That is section 20. Then comes the next clause, section 21, which directs that in default of the patronage being so assigned, or to any extent to which the patronage shall not be so assigned, that is, in case one presentation shall have been given, or more than one, then it would be the remainder, or if none has been given, then the whole patronage shall be exercised by the Crown and the bishop alternately. Therefore I take it that this exercise of the patronage by the Crown and the bishop was introduced as an alternative in case no other parties come forward under clause 20.

147. Has that alternative been practically the only method called into operation, or have any voluntary endowments been made?—Large voluntary contributions and endowments have been made, and sometimes one presentation, sometimes more than one, and in many cases the whole patronage has been assigned to the contributing parties.

148. And also to trustees?—Yes. The patronage may be assigned, not merely to the parties themselves, but to their nominees, and those words let in trustee patronage.

149. But in the great majority of instances the patronage remains with the Crown and the bishop alternately?—I believe it is so in a considerable majority of cases.

150. Can the patronage of any of those incumbencies be transferred, after they have been once created, to persons undertaking to endow the churches?—Where no assignment

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has been made, or where only a partial assignment has been made, and where either the whole patronage or a portion of it therefore resides now in the Crown or the bishop, the Commissioners may go on assigning the future patronage, either wholly or partially, to individuals willing to come forward and make further contribution.

151. They may take the patronage from the Crown or the bishop without consent, and grant it to persons giving additional endowments?—Exactly so.

152. That may be done at any future time?—At any future time. The exercise of the patronage by the Crown and the bishop is considered merely a temporary arrangement in case of there being no one willing to come forward to purchase, as it were, the patronage.

153. Then the object of the Act was to establish the general principle, that whoever would endow the church should be the patron?—So I understand it, decidedly, as far as the question of patronage is concerned.

154. But the question of the amount of endowment that shall be required rests solely with the Ecclesiastical Commissioners?—It does.

155. Are the districts formed without the consent of the incumbent or of the patron?—They are, after due notice. The Commissioners have in all cases given both to the patron and to the incumbent full opportunity of stating their objections, and have considered those objections very deliberately and carefully, and have always given them full weight.

156. These districts are not assigned where there is any church at present existing?—Where there is any consecrated church in use for the purposes of divine service there is no power to assign a district.

157. What are the circumstances under which a district can be constituted under Sir Robert Peel's Act?—The amount of the population and the general want of further spiritual instruction in the district; and the Act requires that there should be a certain amount of endowment provided from some quarter or other, either by the Commissioners themselves or by other parties.

158. It does not provide that there should be any certain amount of population unprovided for?—No, there is no distinct amount of population specified in the Act; but immediately after it passed the Commissioners came to a resolution that they would not constitute any district to which they contributed out of their own funds, containing a less population than 2,000.

159. Can a district parish be established under Sir Robert Peel's Act in connexion with a church that has been already consecrated?—Certainly not.

160. A district to be constituted under Sir Robert Peel's Act must not have within its limits a consecrated building?—Not one in use for the purposes of divine service.

161. The space to be occupied by a district under Sir Robert Peel's Act must be devoid of a consecrated building for divine worship?—Certainly.

162. Is there any instance where difficulties have been by the Commissioners thrown in the way of persons willing to endow churches under Sir Robert Peel's Act?—I think not; I think there have generally been great facilities afforded to contributors. I do not recollect any material case of difficulty.

163. How would you account for the very small number which have been consecrated, and the patronage of which has become vested in private individuals?—In some cases the contributions offered as the condition of patronage being assigned have not been considered by the Commissioners to be of an adequate amount.

164. There are a good many districts where the patronage is not assigned?—There are still a great many districts.

165. Is that provision of Sir Robert Peel's Act generally known?—Perhaps not. In many cases I have found parties ignorant of it; but the Commissioners at one time announced publicly that there were still many districts in which the patronage had not been assigned, and inviting contributions, and showing the public generally how they might obtain the patronage of those churches.

166. The districts do not become new parishes till a church is built and consecrated?—No.

167. They have to provide a church before the provisions of the Act are fully complied with?—Yes. Practically we have found that districts which were constituted without any original prospect of a church have had churches built within them very rapidly.

168. In those cases where the patronage has rested with the bishop and the Crown the church has been endowed out of revenues provided by the Ecclesiastical Commissioners?—It has.

169. The Crown has the first turn always?—The Crown nominates before the bishop, according to the provisions of the Act.

170. Is there any prescribed measure of contribution according to which the Commissioners give either the first or the perpetual advowson of such a district?—They have never laid down any distinct rule. They have never fixed any precise amount which shall be the consideration for which they would give the whole or any portion of the patronage, but

but they have in every particular case well considered the amount that was offered, and have been careful to avoid giving the patronage for an inadequate consideration in order that it might not be drawn into a precedent. At first they gave the whole patronage only in cases where the whole means were supplied of providing a church, and a repairing fund, and 50*l.* a year were contributed towards the endowment. They have since, in some few cases, accepted a somewhat smaller contribution as sufficient to secure the whole patronage.

171. But with regard to churches already built and consecrated, have they any rule as to what increase of endowment they will require for giving the patronage?—No; they have laid down no precise rule upon that subject.

172. Are not the Commissioners absolutely precluded from putting the patronage out of this course of alternation between the Crown and the bishop, except in consideration for contributions?—Undoubtedly.

173. They cannot do it on any other ground?—Certainly not; the Act is specific upon that point.

174. In the case of district chapelries under the Church Building Act where the incumbent of the mother church has the patronage, if the principles of Sir Robert Peel's Act were applied, then whenever a sufficient endowment was offered for a distinct chapelry the person offering it would have the patronage of the living?—If the same principle were adopted in those cases that would be the result.

175. The Commissioners are not obliged in any instance to assign the patronage to individuals unless they think the amount of contribution offered is sufficient to justify it?—An unlimited discretion in this respect is left with the Commissioners.

176. Therefore if a person were to offer any sum it might be refused, and the patronage still remain in the Crown and the Bishop?—It might so.

177. In many of these cases where the bishop has the patronage the endowment has been given by other parties, and at their request the patronage has been vested in the bishop?—Yes; the contributing parties have nominated the bishop as patron instead of themselves.

178. Is it not your opinion that a relaxation in the terms proposed by the Commissioners would offer a great inducement to many parties to become candidates for patronage?—I think so. I think there is a disposition in the Commissioners rather to relax, not their rules, but the principles upon which they have hitherto acted. I mean, to assign the patronage in consideration of a smaller amount of contribution.

179. Do you consider that Sir Robert Peel's Act applies to those parishes which have the misfortune to be under the operation of local Acts?—That will depend upon the nature of the provisions of the local Acts. I have a very strong impression that a great many of those provisions in local Acts are overruled by Sir Robert Peel's Act. If they are of the nature of general legislation they would be virtually revoked by the subsequent Act; but I can conceive local Acts which may contain provisions not so overruled.

GEORGE JELF, ESQUIRE, further examined:

180. In parish churches, generally speaking, there is no power to let pews?—I am not aware of any power to let a pew in an old parish church, unless it can be done by custom or prescription, or by a special Act of Parliament.

181. Do you conceive that there is any power to assign pew-rents, except under what are commonly called the Church Commission Acts?—There is, I conceive, no such power except under these Acts, with the exceptions I have just mentioned. The power of establishing the scale of pew-rents, and of assigning those pew-rents, is given, under the first Act of Parliament, to the Church Commissioners. It applies to cases where they have built a church themselves out of the parliamentary grants made to them, or contributed out of that grant money towards the erection of it.

182. You conceive that they cannot assign the pew-rents, except where they have either built the church themselves or contributed towards the building of it?—Yes; a point of some difficulty has been raised on this subject in consequence of the ambiguous use of the words "built, acquired, or appropriated." The exact meaning of those words "acquired or appropriated" has been a matter of some doubt amongst lawyers; but I think the impression amongst those who have attended to the subject is, that the power of establishing under the Church Building Acts those pew-rents is limited to the cases which I have just mentioned.

183. Will you have the goodness to state to the Commissioners what course is generally pursued with regard to the assignment of pew-rents in churches, either built or aided in building by the Church Building Commission?—Upon the completion or towards the completion of the church the local committee and parties upon the spot are requested to send up for the consideration of the Church Commissioners the scale of pew-rents proposed, taking care that such scale is suitable to the means and condition in life of the congregation, of course, and securing the free and unappropriated seats which are by Act

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of Parliament specially reserved and set apart for the use of poor persons resorting there for ever, and they can never have pew-rents fixed on them.

184. Do you mean to use the terms "free" and "unappropriated" as if they were synonymous terms?—I am using the word free as found in the Act of Parliament.

185. Will you state what proportion of free seats must be reserved?—The Act of Parliament requires that at least one fifth should be free, but practically speaking the Church Commissioners require much more.

186. You do not mean one third of the whole accommodation?—In practice, certainly more than one third of the whole accommodation provided is free.

187. Including the children?—I think that would include children.

188. The children of the schools are considered as occupying part of the unappropriated free seats?—Yes.

189. But is not it the fact that in some churches which are built or aided in building by the Church Building Commissioners no pews are assigned at all?—The clergyman and his family are entitled to a pew of at least six seats, and also his servants, I think, to four.

190. But otherwise in some cases all the rest of the seats are free?—With the exception of those to which pews are attached.

191. There is no power to assign free seats for churchwardens, is there?—There is not.

192. Has not there been a complaint made in some parts of the country as to the injurious operation of that necessity for leaving a large proportion of the seats unappropriated, as not suited to the habits and manners of particular parts of the country where the population, even the poorest classes, rather desire to pay something than to be put into free seats, which they consider rather a mark of humiliation?—I think that feeling has arisen of late years, and that it is somewhat upon the increase. From what I have heard, more than what I know officially, there is a feeling on the part of the poorer inhabitants that they would rather prefer paying a small sum of money to secure a seat; first, because, perhaps, their pride is a little affected by it; secondly, because they then can really (what I believe the poor people do value very much) secure in that way a seat which they can reserve to themselves.

193. An accustomed seat?—Yes.

194. On the other hand, do you recollect any cases where complaints have come before you as an officer of the Commissioners, or before the Commissioners, of there being an insufficiency of free seats, and the rented pews being too numerous in a church?—I should say not.

195. Is it not the case, in many of those churches which are quite full of pews, that you never see any working people at all?—I should say so very distinctly.

196. Do you consider an assigned seat for which no payment is made still to be a free seat?—If it is an open seat.

197. But if it is assigned so that a particular person only can occupy it, but no payment is made for it, would you consider that a free seat?—Yes; that is free to a certain extent.

198. It is free; but appropriated?—I know of no power under the Church Acts, by which, if it does not pay rent, the Church Commissioners can permanently appropriate the seat.

199. But the churchwardens can?—Not under the Church Acts.

200. Do you imagine that the churchwardens have, in regard to those parishes of modern creation, the same rights as to the distribution and appropriation of seats that they have in the old parish church?—I should doubt it, for this reason; for the Act directs that those seats shall be free from rent, and appropriated and set apart for the use of poor persons resorting there for ever. I am inclined to think this means a general reservation of these seats for the use of the poor; and I do not find any power to the churchwardens to appropriate any free seat to any particular person.

201. Have not the parish officers, the ministers and churchwardens, a right to arrange the congregation for the decent performance of divine worship?—No doubt, under the old state of things, but here the churchwardens are acting under special powers given them by special Acts; and by those Acts I should conceive they should be governed.

202. As to the amount of pew-rents, the Commissioners generally have been guided by those who have local knowledge?—Yes.

203. Has the attention of the Commissioners often been directed to the desirableness of having cheap sittings for mechanics and small tradesmen, as well as expensive pews for the rich and open sittings for the poor?—Yes.

204. Has any provision been made of that sort?—Yes; low-rented sittings.

205. To a considerable extent?—Not to a very considerable extent.

206. Would it not be desirable if there were a large discretion left to the Church Commissioners in reference to these points, so that they might appropriate the pews according to the peculiar wants and habits of the locality?—I think the Commissioners have

have already sufficient discretion, because they are not required by the Act of Parliament to appropriate more than one fifth as free sittings. Generally speaking, a proposal will come up to them for their consideration in reference to a pecuniary grant, in almost all cases disclosing a much larger number than one third of free sittings. I think, generally, the feeling has been in favour of free sittings.

207. In cases where you are providing very much for an artizan population, would it not be desirable to enable you to build a church with the power of assigning and appropriating a larger portion than two-thirds of the sittings?—I should doubt whether more than two-thirds of the sittings ought to be subject to pew-rents.

208. Have the Commissioners the power of altering the scale of pew-rents at any future time, when it has once been assigned?—Not the Commissioners; the bishop, the patron, and the incumbent may do so; the churchwardens are bound to obey their directions.

209. You mean the scale as to the amount of pew-rents?—Yes.

210. Is there any power of altering the proportion of rented pews and free sittings, when once it has been settled?—No; those seats which have been declared and reported to Parliament by the Church Commissioners as free can never have pew rents fixed on them.

211. Supposing a representation came from one of the manufacturing districts, that it would be very desirable, instead of having the seats free, to have them let at low rates, that could not be done when once they have been declared to be free?—There is no power to do it, either on the part of the bishop or on the part of the Commissioners, or of any other authority, that I am aware of.

212. Have not Her Majesty's law advisers given an opinion with reference to taking rents for pews in districts formed under Sir Robert Peel's Act?—A case carefully and impartially drawn up, was submitted to the law officers of the Crown, I think about a year ago, by the Church Commissioners, arising out of a case in the diocese of Gloucester and Bristol; and the question was, whether or not, in the case of a new church to which the Church Commissioners had made a grant, as they are empowered expressly to do under Sir Robert Peel's Act, with respect to a church in a district constituted under that Act, they have the power of establishing a scale of pew-rents, of assigning those pew-rents in the ordinary way to the incumbent and to the clerk; and the opinion of the law officers of Crown was, that the Church Commissioners had under those circumstances such a power.

213. But they can only do it where they have themselves made a grant towards the building?—No.

214. Then if an individual were to secure the patronage in that district by building a church there would be no power of taking the pew-rents in that church?—I do not apprehend that the power of taking pew-rents would be at all governed by the arrangement as to the patronage.

215. It appears as if a church built by a grant from the Commissioners would in that respect have an advantage over a church built by individuals?—Yes, to that extent.

216. We are speaking now of districts constituted under Sir Robert Peel's Act. You have stated that the law officers of the Crown have said that the Commissioners may assign pew-rents under certain circumstances in those churches?—Yes.

217. But the condition of that is, the Commissioners having contributed something towards the building of the church?—Yes.

218. Is the amount material? For example: supposing the Commissioners were to give 20*l.* towards building a church in one of Sir Robert Peel's districts, would that entitle them to assign pew-rents?—I conceive so.

219. Supposing an individual were to give so large a sum towards the building of that church as would induce the Ecclesiastical Commissioners to take the patronage out of its ordinary course in the Crown and the bishop alternately, and to vest it in him, would that prevent the Building Commissions from helping him, and giving him something towards the building of that church?—No; because there is an express power given by Sir Robert Peel's Act.

220. Then a person might obtain from the Ecclesiastical Commissioners the perpetual patronage of a district church under Sir Robert Peel's Act, and yet might be aided by the Church Building Commissioners so as to have pew-rents assigned in that church?—Yes, provided they made a grant. Perhaps the Commissioners will permit me just to refer to the clause which establishes this point, the twenty-fourth section of 6 & 7 Vict. c. 37. "And whereas it may by expedient that Her Majesty's Commissioners for building new "churches should be able to apply a portion of the funds placed at their disposal towards "promoting the purposes of this Act: Be it enacted, That it shall be lawful for the said "Commissioners to make any such grant in aid of the erection of any such new church or "chapel as aforesaid as shall seem fit to them, if they are authorized so to do under the "Church Building Acts, although the right of patronage of such church or chapel may "not belong, on the consecration thereof, to the incumbent of the original parish in "which such church or chapel shall be situate, anything in such Acts to the contrary "notwithstanding."

 221. Supposing

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221. Supposing a church to have been built under Sir Robert Peel's Act, and there were no pews in the church but the seats were all free and unappropriated, there never could be any pew-rents whatever in that church?—I conceive not.

222. Do you consider that the statutory use of the terms "free and unappropriated" in the Church Building Acts over-rides the common-law right of the churchwardens to arrange the congregation as they consider best, without giving to any individual a vested interest or a private right in such sitting?—I consider that the churchwardens acting in the execution of their duties under this Act are not empowered specially to allot seats which have been declared free by the Church Commissioners, and reported so to be to Parliament.

223. Then the Commissioners may conclude from what you have stated that no new churches in these districts, whether they be distinct parishes or district parishes or district chapelries, can be in the same position with respect to the accommodation of the public as old parish churches?—Not to all intents and purposes.

224. Is not the course of these things this: you have a plan of the church, certain parts of the church are marked "free," and others are marked "pews to be let;" the price of the pews is fixed by the Commissioners, and the churchwardens have the letting of those pews; then A. B. comes and says, "I will take this pew," and he takes it?—Yes.

225. As long as he pays the rent, do you conceive that the churchwardens have the power of removing him. In an old parish church, the churchwardens have, at their own peril, the power of altering the arrangements of the church as from time to time they think fit to be for the good of the parish; but in this case, if a person has taken a pew, as long as he pays the rent can he be removed by the churchwarden?—I apprehend that under the thirty-second section of the 59 Geo. III. the duty of the churchwardens is to let the pews, and that the pew-rents shall be paid in advance. It says, that the churchwardens shall not "let or sell any pews and seats, except to parishioners, during the time such parishioners shall continue to be inhabitants of the parish; and every sale of any pew or seat shall be subject to such reserved rent as shall have been fixed" by the Commissioners, and that, "all pew-rents shall be payable in advance," that is to say, one year's rent shall be paid on the admission to the pew or seat, if such admission shall be given at Lady Day or Michaelmas, or if at any intermediate period then the proportion of the half-year to Lady Day or Michaelmas, as the case may be, and a half-year's rent over and above such proportion, and thereafter half-yearly payments shall be made in advance, commencing on the Lady Day or Michaelmas immediately following the taking of such pew; and every such pew and seat shall be forfeited and become vacant by the discontinuance of any such payment in advance for two following half-years." With reference to the other question, I conceive that the churchwardens have a kind of discretion to seat the inhabitants entitled to pews according to the best of their judgment; that they have a discretion as to the parties whom they shall admit into certain pews or seats.

226. Have they a discretion as to the parties to whom they shall let the pews? From the clauses which you have read it appears that so long as the person taking the pew complies with the law in respect of paying for the pew he is irremovable by the churchwardens. Do you think that the churchwardens have in the cases of pews let under these Acts the same discretion which they unquestionably have in old parish churches, of re-ordering things, if they see fit to do so?—I should be inclined to think that a person paying his rent in advance for a seat which had been before allotted to him would be entitled to that seat.

227. Could he hand it over to his successor in his own house?—I think not.

228. His right would be only personal?—I think so.

229. With regard to those churches which are built in Sir Robert Peel's districts, is it possible to demand rent for the pews, supposing the church to be built without any assistance from the Commissioners?—I conceive not.

230. Then the privilege of demanding rent for the pews only applies to churches to which the Commissioners have contributed?—So I conceive.

231. And to that portion of the church which was originally set apart for pews, however small that might happen to be?—Yes. The same law which governs the question of pew-rents under the Church Building Act would apply to a church built under Sir Robert Peel's Act.

232. Have you any information upon any other points which you think it desirable to give to the Commissioners?—I was desired the other day to supply the Commissioners, as far as I could, with those points which had been attended to and remedied since the consolidating Bill, to which I referred on a former occasion, was sent to the Home Office in 1843, and I have selected some of the chief points connected with church extension which have been since that period provided for by different Acts of Parliament. If it is the pleasure of the Commissioners, I will state them as shortly as possible. Since the consolidated Bill was sent to the Home Office these extensions and improvements have taken place in the Church Building Acts. By the first section of the 8 & 9 Vict. cap. 70., extending and explaining the provisions of the thirtieth section of the 3 Geo. IV. cap. 72.,

a rather

a rather difficult matter, involved in the substitution of a new church for an old church and the transfer of the endowments from the one to the other, has been provided for by a clause which may be said to work very well; I have heard no complaints of it. It could only formerly be done by a special Act of Parliament.

233. That is where the old church was in decay and a new one was built in lieu of it?—Yes; or inconveniently situated. The next was the appointment of churchwardens for a district chapelry or a consolidated chapelry, under the sixth section of the 8 & 9 Vict. cap. 70., and, under the seventh section of that Act the appointment of churchwardens for a new church without a district the site of which has been conveyed to the Church Commissioners. The ninth section is an improvement on the law with respect to the formation of consolidated districts. The thirteenth section of the same Act vests the freehold of the sites of churches in the incumbents of parishes, and so as to burial grounds, and so as to parsonage houses. The fourteenth section of the same Act and 9 & 10 Vict. cap. 68, give increased and very useful powers for obtaining additional burial grounds. The latter clause empowers the formation of what may be called a group of burial grounds, which may be formed out of one piece of ground, and separated off for various parishes, and enables a chapel to be erected for the performance of the burial service with respect to those burial grounds; the question of fees being settled by the respective incumbents of the different parishes being entitled to receive the same fees as were receivable at the old burial grounds. That has been a considerable step towards obtaining additional burial grounds upon the parochial system. It has been successfully carried out at Oxford and at Cambridge. It is in contradiction to what may be called the private cemetery system. It is now, I believe, contemplated to carry the same plan out in different large towns. The fifteenth section of the 8 & 9 Vict. enables a district parish to be resigned instead of the original parish. The sixteenth section is an enlargement of the power of altering the boundaries. The seventeenth section makes those district chapelries perpetual curacies, and gives the incumbent exclusive cure of souls within the district. The twenty-second section takes away from the Church Commissioners, who could not properly execute the duty, the power of apportioning charitable bequests and gifts between the original parish and the new ecclesiastical divisions within that parish, and lodges that power in the Court of Chancery, and also the power of apportioning the debts and charges.

234. In connexion with that a good deal of litigation has arisen, and is likely to arise, as to the apportionment of charitable bequests?—I have so understood.

235. It is not yet determined whether it applies to charitable bequests that are left under special trusts by the donor? –No.

236. And is there not a doubt how far it applies to bequests left to a particular school or a particular foundation?—Yes. A number of questions of that sort may arise, involving, possibly, much litigation. A declaratory Act, showing what was the intention of it, that it was merely intended to apply to charitable bequests given to incumbents and churchwardens, and no others, would be a great good, and prevent litigation. It is a subject which has been taken out of the hands of the Church Commissioners, from their feeling themselves incompetent to deal with the question.

237. Will you proceed with your statement of the recent improvements in the law?—The twenty-third section of the 8 & 9 Vict. and the fourth section of the 11 & 12 Vict. enabled the bishop, patron, and incumbent to enter into an agreement touching the right of patronage previously to the consecration of the church, which I have before adverted to. The 11 & 12 Vict. cap. 38. enlarges the powers as to boundaries of districts under the Patronage Act. Those are the principal improvements which have taken place since this consolidated Bill was sent to the Home Office.

238. You have not in the course of your evidence given a statement of the way in which the fees received in different parochial districts are affected, according as they are divided under one Act or another. Can you shortly describe that?—I think I stated, though perhaps not at very great length, in my first examination, the way in which the fees arising from the performance of the offices of the Church were or could be appropriated. In the case of district parishes they go at once, by force of law, without any order or power of ordering otherwise by the Church Commissioners, to the perpetual curate of the new parish. Until the new district parish comes into full operation, none of the offices of the Church can be performed in the church of any district parish, except perhaps burials, and then only by the licensed stipendiary curate, till after the district parish takes full effect; the object being evidently to secure or to guarantee the incumbent against loss of fees. So much with respect to district parishes. In the case of district chapelries, the fees can be apportioned, as the Church Commissioners may think proper, between the incumbent of the parish and the minister of the district church.

239. Can they give the whole to the minister of the district church?—Yes; or reserve the whole to the incumbent of the parish; and it is one of the difficulties to contend with at the Church Commission Office, that from the poverty of the living often of the original parish the Church Commissioners have felt themselves obliged, contrary to policy and contrary to their wish, to reserve the fees even in perpetuity to the incumbent of the mother church.

 240. Has

George Jelf, Esq.

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240. Has not their practice generally been, to reserve the fees to the incumbent of the mother church, if he desires it, and to give them to the minister of the district chapelry on the next avoidance?—Yes.

241. In the case of a consolidated district, do not the fees for all the offices performed in the church go at once to the minister of the consolidated district?—No; there is an alteration of the law. Under the 8 & 9 Vict. they are reserved to the incumbent of the parish or parishes, unless they relinquish them.

242. They are reserved absolutely?—After the avoidance the fees go to the incumbent of the consolidated district.

243. You have not mentioned distinct parishes? but of course in those, as soon as a parish becomes a distinct parish, all the fees go to the incumbent of it?—Yes.

244. Are there any double fees?—The Church Commissioners never recognize double fees.

245. Have not double fees, in practice, continued very much?—The Church Commissioners always set their faces against it.

246. Is not it generally conceived that double fees, except under local Acts of Parliament, are altogether illegal?—Undoubtedly.

247. The arrangement of the fees in respect of churches built under the Patronage Act of the 1 & 2 Will. IV. cap. 38. is somewhat complicated?—Yes. It should however be borne in mind, that it interferes with the rights of the patrons and incumbents; because a church might be built adversely to their wishes. The effect of being able to build a church in any parish, without some controlling power on the subject, might have been utterly to ruin the incumbent of a parish, by the subtraction, without his consent, of the fees; to say nothing of the ill-will and discord the erection of a church, under some circumstances, and in some localities where it was not wanted, might engender. Therefore as a church may be built without the consent of the patron or incumbent, the legislature said, we will reserve those fees to the incumbent, unless he consents to relinquish them. There is a power of relaxation of the rule, which was introduced after the alarm which occurred upon the introduction of the Act, to this effect, that the fees for all offices, except fees for marriage, may be, after an avoidance of the mother church, assigned over by the Church Commissioners or the bishop, as the case may be, to the incumbent of the particular district.

248. But under no circumstances whatever can the fees for marriages be given to the incumbent of any district church built under the Patronage Act, except with the consent of the patron and the incumbent of the mother church?—No. I believe great alarm would have been excited in Parliament if it had been attempted, because the effect of it might have been in some cases to ruin incumbents.

249. Was not the lamentable result of that in one town in Yorkshire (at Bradford,) to keep two churches shut up for years, in consequence of a dispute about fees?—I have heard of it, but I know not the particulars.

Adjourned to Tuesday next, at two o'clock.

Tuesday, 8th May 1849.

LORD ASHLEY, M.P., in the Chair.

Bishop of London.

8th May 1849.

THE LORD BISHOP OF LONDON, a Member of the Commission, examined.

250. Has your Lordship, from your experience as a parochial clergyman and as Bishop of Chester or London, formed a decided opinion as to the expediency of dividing populous parishes?—I am most decidedly of opinion that such division is very desirable. I consider that it is carrying out the principle of parochial division which is an essential feature of the polity of our national Church.

251. Can your Lordship name any parishes in your diocese in which this has been effected?—I can name some parishes of my diocese in the country and in the metropolis. In the country the great parish of Barking has been divided into two separate and distinct parishes, the parish of Barking and the parish of Great Ilford. The tithes and ecclesiastical dues accruing in each of the new parishes have been assigned to the respective vicars; this was done at the suggestion of and with the full approval of the patrons, the warden and fellows of All Souls College, Oxford, and in addition to this an ecclesiastical district has been taken from the parish of Ilford, the district of Barking Side. The result is, that where formerly there was a non-resident rector, and one curate, who had the charge of the whole parish,

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parish, there are now two resident rectors, each having a curate, besides the incumbent of Barking Side; and in consequence the old parish church, which was in a wretched state of repair, disfigured by every kind of incumbrance and very thinly attended, is enlarged and put into a state of complete repair, re-pewed with uniform open seats, and is quite full twice every Sunday. A new church has been built in Great Ilford, which is well attended, and a new church at Barking Side. I give that as an instance of the division of a country parish. In London, when I was rector of St. Botolph Bishopsgate, with the approval of the Bishop of London, the patron, I obtained an Act of Parliament for dividing the parish, erecting a new church, and endowing it with 300*l.* per annum from the income of the rector. There is the case of St. Matthew Bethnal Green, containing 75,000 inhabitants, which had one church and one clergyman, a curate, the rector being non-resident. The first step towards division was taken by the Church Building Commissioners, who erected a large church and assigned a district to it; since that, nine new churches have been built, and a tenth is about to be built, each having a district assigned to it, with its own incumbent, in some cases with a parsonage, and in some with large commodious schools, and with the prospect of having a parsonage house and schools for every district; so that in a parish where there were 75,000 inhabitants and one clergyman, there are now twelve churches and about twenty clergymen. The result is a most marked improvement in the appearance, habits, and general character of the population. I only give this as an instance; but there are other still more important parishes in which I have been desirous of effecting a division, but have been prevented by obstacles hitherto insuperable. I will mention the instance of St. George's Hanover Square, which has been partially divided by the separation from the mother church of what are called the out-wards, including Pimlico. This was done by the Church Building Commissioners when St. Peter's Pimlico was built; that is now a district parish. There are also the new ecclesiastical districts of St. Mark's North Audley Street, and Hanover Chapel Regent Street; and in the district parish of St. Peter's there are the district chapelries of St. Paul's Wilton Place and St. Michael's Chester Square. In 1844, when the living became vacant, I thought it my duty as patron to make an effort to have the parish completely divided, and I addressed the following letter to the vestry:

"Fulham, 11th December 1844.

"The Bishop of London begs to inform the vestry of St. George's Hanover Square, that "he is desirous of effecting an arrangement for dividing that parish into several distinct "and independent parishes for ecclesiastical purposes; for the propriety and expediency "of such division no other evidence need be adduced than that which is to be found in "the magnitude and population of the parish. The out-wards have been already consti-"tuted a distinct parish by an Order in Council; but it is obvious that the new parish of "Saint Peter's is of unwieldy magnitude, and that a subdivision of it is to be desired. "The bishop proposes, that it should be divided into three or four distinct parishes, a power "being reserved of further sub-division when the increase of buildings and population "shall require it. The incumbents of those parishes will have incomes arising from the "pew-rents, Easter offerings, and fees; to which, in the case of Saint Michael's, will be "added the interest of an endowed fund. With respect to the in-wards, the bishop pro-"poses to constitute Saint Mark's North Audley Street and Grosvenor Chapel in South "Audley Street the churches of distinct parishes, leaving Hanover Chapel, as at present, "a chapel of ease to the mother church. He would also propose the formation of a fourth "parish, if it should be found practicable to erect a church in the neighbourhood of "Shepherd's Market, where there is a large and poor population, wholly unprovided with "church room. Supposing this plan to be carried into effect, each of the incumbents of "the new parishes would be entitled to the Easter offerings, and to the fees for ecclesiastical "offices occurring within his parish; the effect of this would be to diminish the income "of the rectory of Saint George's to an amount probably not exceeding 500*l.* per annum, "the income having been hitherto not less than 1,550*l.* The bishop is of opinion, looking "to the position occupied by the rector of such a parish, and to the demands upon him, "that his annual income ought not to be less than 1,000*l.* The only fund to which, as it "appears to the bishop, recourse may be had, for the purpose of making up the future "income of the rectory to a competent amount, is that which arises from the pew-rents "of the parish church. But there is this difficulty: there seems to be no doubt but that "the practice of taking such rents, although it has prevailed for a long period of years, is "altogether illegal. The bishop has the best grounds for entertaining this opinion. It "becomes therefore a question whether it be not desirable to apply for an Act of Par-"liament for the purpose of legalizing the taking of pew-rents in St. George's church for "the future, and directing the application of them, in part at least, to the augmentation "of the rector's income. There are several other questions which will necessarily arise out "of the proposed arrangement, supposing it to be determined upon, but not any, it is "presumed, which need create any serious difficulty. The main point to which the Bishop "of London is desirous, in the first instance, of calling the attention of the churchwardens "and vestry of St. George's, is the expediency of applying for an Act of Parliament for the "purpose of effecting a division of the parish into several distinct and independent parishes "for ecclesiastical purposes, and of making a provision for the rector of St. George's out "of the pew-rents taken in that church. The Bishop of London will be happy to confer

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"personally with the churchwardens or with any committee of the vestry, upon the proposal now submitted to them, either as to its principle or details; and he relies with confidence upon their readiness to co-operate with him in giving effect to any measure which may appear, upon full consideration, likely to promote the spiritual good of their great and important parish."

The vestry did not accede to this proposal, and in consequence the former arrangement continues, which prevents, in my opinion, a more complete provision being made for the spiritual wants of that parish. The foregoing statement relates to the present parish of St. George Hanover Square, and not to that of St. Peter's Pimlico, which was taken from it, and which has since been partially sub-divided.

C. K. Murray, Esq.

CHARLES KNIGHT MURRAY, Esq., a Member of the Commission, further examined.

252. In addition to your evidence on the 1st of May, will you inform the Commission if in the case of a parish largely endowed any power exists to divide the revenue of such parish without the consent of the patron, so as to make sufficient provision for the spiritual wants of the population?—No such power exists. Incidently, under the provisions of Sir Robert Peel's Act, the revenues of any parish may be affected without the consent of the patron, because without that consent the Ecclesiastical Commissioners for England have the power of constituting a new district, and upon that district becoming a new parish by the consecration of a church; the Act gives the fees arising within its limits to the new incumbent. But the main endowment of the district must be provided by the Commissioners, or from some other source.

253. What is the present law as to redistributing the revenues of such a parish as in your evidence you have alluded to, it being divided with the consent of the patron?—The Act of the 3 & 4 Vict. cap. 113. sect. 74. enables the patron, upon a vacancy or with the consent of the incumbent, to redistribute the revenues so as to appropriate portions of them to any other churches, chapels, or districts in his own patronage.

254. (*To the Bishop of London.*) Does your Lordship know of any instance in which the power to effect a redistribution has been called in question?—I believe the late Archbishop of Canterbury endowed a new district church out of the revenues of the rectory of Cliff. I myself, within the last two years, have obtained the sanction of the Ecclesiastical Commissioners to take 400*l.* a year from the rectory of St Catherine Coleman in the City of London, where I considered that the population was so small as to justify a diminution of the rectory, and distribute that sum in annual augmentations to some of the new churches in Bethnal Green and St. Thomas Charter House; and it is my intention (if it please God to spare my life) to deal in the same manner with another large living in the city.

255. Is there any power to enable the patron to apply the funds of the parish to kindred objects, such as schools?—No, only for the augmentation of poor livings.

Rev. J. Jackson.

THE REV. JOHN JACKSON, Rector of St. James's Westminster, examined.

256. What is the amount of the population of your parish?—37,398 by the last census of 1841.

257. Are you aware that there has been any increase in the population?—We reckon that there has probably been an increase of about 2,000, without the addition of a single house, from the additional crowding; there are many streets in which every house now is let out in rooms, which at that time were let to single families. The alterations in St. Giles's have affected our parish very much.

258. Can you state the amount of church accommodation?—6,278 sittings.

259. How many would those accommodate?—I suppose about double the number; 2,280 are free, and many of those are occupied by children. Those are usually counted as free—about a third.

260. What proportion of children is there?—There must be nearly 1,000 children; they do not take up 1,000 seats.

261. Are there any ecclesiastical subdivisions in your parish?—There is one only.

262. What is the nature of that subdivision?—It is a district which was taken off by an Order in Council under the Act of 1 & 2 Vict., the Church Building Commission.

263. Is it endowed?—Yes, there is an endowment; that is to say, there is a fund that was raised by Dean Andrews, which was made over to the incumbent—2,000*l.* consols; and there is a fund which we raise by a collection once a year in the church.

264. Who has the patronage?—I have.

265 Is this an independent district?—Yes.

266. Can they solemnize marriages?—Not marriages.

267. Nor baptisms?—Yes.

268. Who receives the fee?—The incumbent, by my permission.

269. But only by your permission and not by right?—I believe not.

270. By right it would come to you?—I suppose it would.

271. What is your meaning, when you speak of the district as being independent?—I mean merely that it is legally independent. I suppose I have no right to go into it and visit a person without the consent of the incumbent. As far as regards charity it is thoroughly dependent.

272. Have you felt it your duty to make any other provision than that which is afforded by the churches now erected, for the instruction of the people, and affording them opportunities for public worship?—We have a service in the schoolroom; that was partly to provide additional accommodation and partly to meet the objection that they had no clothes to go to church in. I opened the school-room morning and evening.

273. How many services have you in the school-room?—In the school-room there is one a Sunday. We had two, but the morning service was very ill attended, and latterly not attended at all; the evening service is tolerably well attended.

274. Every Sunday evening?—Yes.

275. Is it performed by yourself or your curate?—By one of our curates, and I sometimes take it it myself.

276. It is tolerably well attended?—Yes, generally it is; a hundred adults, and a good many children. Those are persons who went nowhere before.

277. In fact, the whole accommodation for public worship consists of the parish church; the chapel of Saint Luke's, and three other chapels?—Yes. But I was asked what district there was; there is but that one district.

278. Will you state what other places of public worship there are?—Saint Philip's chapel in Regent Street, Archbishop Tennyson's chapel in Regent Street, and a proprietary chapel in York Street, close by the church.

279. What is the number of ordained clergymen officiating in the parish?—Eight with pastoral work, and three others who only officiate on Sundays.

280. Including yourself?—Yes.

281. There are eleven in all?—Yes. Then those three, or at least two of them after the next voidance, would have to take pastoral work.

282. You allude to Saint Philip's, Regent Street?—Yes, and York Street.

283. Have you ever contemplated any further ecclesiastical subdivision in your parish?—No. The difficulty is, that in making such a division there could be nothing like a fair proportion of rich and poor.

284. What is your view of the expediency of it, supposing the thing were practicable?—If it were practicable to divide it in fair proportions, I should think it was very expedient. The experience we have of the district in our parish is not such as to encourage us to expect much advantage from subdivision, as that district is utterly unable to support any one of its own charities.

285. Do you refer to Saint Luke's?—Yes. For instance, for our national schools in donations, subscriptions, and collections last year we raised 1,047*l.*, only 15*l.* of that could be raised from Saint Luke's district by collections and subscriptions. For other schools for girls we raised 624*l.*, and three guineas of that alone came from St. Luke's district.

286. Do you think that the boundaries of Saint Luke's could be improved?—There was a population of 7,000 when it was first set apart, now it is probably 9,000, and they are nearly all poor.

287. When it was first set apart, could it not have been set apart under a better arrangement?—Probably it might.

288. In the principle of subdivision you entirely concur, but you see some difficulties in the way of effecting it?—Yes. I concur in the principle of subdivision, provided it could be done to give each parish a certain proportion of rich and poor.

289. And to give the incumbent an adequate income?—Yes; but in such parishes as these,—I have thought the matter over a good deal, and I scarcely see that any plan would be preferable to the present, provided we could get men enough to work the parish. I see my way to at least two more clergymen, and I am trying now to raise subscriptions to furnish another curate for St. Luke's district. We ought to have twelve clergymen in the parish, and with that I think it might be done.

290. What do you consider to be the real and practical obstacles to the furtherance of sub-division in your parish?—If it were divided, say into ten distinct parishes, there would be five perhaps which would have very few poor, and another five which would be unable to support their own charities.

291. About what is the amount of the pew-rents of Saint James's church?—I think about 1,200*l.* or 1,300*l.* a year.

292. What proportion of that goes to the support of the clergy of the parish?—None whatever.

293. To what is it applied?—The support of the fabric, everything but what can be charged on the poor rates—I mean for all parochial expenditure.

 294. What

Rev. J. Jackson.

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294. What sources of certain income has the rector, not including Easter offerings and fee?—He has five houses and a glebe in Jermyn Street, which bring in at present 500*l.* a year, which will improve when the leases fall in, and an annuity of 27*l.* by Act of Parliament from the churchwardens, and that is all.

295. The rest is all voluntary?—Yes, fees and offerings.

296. You spoke of a part of the parish as being poor; may it not be poor relatively, poor for the parish of Saint James's and not poor for a parish at the east end of London?—I do not think you would be able to judge, if you were to visit just behind Saint Luke's Church. I believe no part of London has such dwellings for the poor, or such squalid poverty dwelling in them.

297. In a district which you have pointed out one would suppose that there were many tolerably good streets in which the tradesmen might be expected to do something; such a street as Broad Street, for instance?—That probably would have contained, when the district was made, many houses inhabited by single families, but it would be difficult now, to find one; you will see three or four or five bells at each door.

298. Then there is Poland Street?—There would be a place for another church in Poland Street, at the head of Marlborough Street, which would take of part of Saint Luke's district.

299. From what does the income of the minister of Saint Luke's arise?—The pew rents of last year amounted to 128*l.*; and the endowment, that is to say, the interest of 2,000*l.* which was originally given by Dean Andrews for purchasing free sittings, which was made over to the incumbent of that church, and some money which we raise by an annual sermon at Saint James's church, one fifth of which is given to the incumbent and the rest funded every year, produce altogether 98*l.* 11*s.* 4*d.* We pay him from the national schools 50*l.* a year for the use of the gallery for our school children. And altogether, with the fifth of the sermon, which last year produced 740*l.*, making 316*l.*; out of that he has to pay the expenses of the church, which were 139*l.*, leaving 177*l.* 8*s.*

300. Of how many people has he the charge?—9,000.

301. Has he any house?—No house, and out of that he half maintains a curate; he pays 50*l.*, and I find the rest.

302. What was the amount collected in any one year, last year for instance, for the charities which you distributed in Saint James's?—I am afraid I cannot answer that question. I do not know. For the national schools, and those connected with them, upwards of 1,000*l.*, and for the other schools upwards of 600*l.*

303. Do you include the ragged school?—Yes; that includes the national schools, all the infant schools, and the ragged schools.

304. Have you included the subscriptions or other collections?—The subscriptions and donations were 248*l.*, the collections in the church 298*l.*

305. Do you think that it would be possible to divide Saint James's parish into districts, in which there should be a fair proportion of rich and poor?—I do not think it could possibly be done.

306. Is it your opinion that, under present circumstances, it would tend to the welfare of that parish that it should be divided into districts, not independent parishes?—I think not. I think it might very possibly be advantageous to take out one district in the northern part, which might be taken out to give a fair proportion of rich and poor, and to build a church for it; but the eastern part must, I think, be kept in some degree connected with the south-western part, otherwise I do not see how the charities can possibly be supported.

307. You cannot suggest any plan by which the parish might be divided into districts, in which there should be the same mixture of rich and poor?— No. I have looked over the map again and again with that view.

308. Would it not be possible, if there were perfectly distinct and separate parishes, still to have that general influence brought to bear over the whole, so that the rich would still contribute to the poor?—I do not think so.

309. At present you consider that there is one machinery for the whole parish?—Exactly.

310. And that machinery extends to all the charities of the parish?—Yes; the rector acts as a kind of sucking pump and draws up the money from the rich part of the parish, and pours it out to the poor through his clergy.

311. Should you adhere to the same opinion, if the parish were subdivided, and an adequate income from other sources provided from every clergyman so appointed?—I think that they would find it impossible to support the charities.

312. With the exception of the district you mentioned in the north?—Yes.

313. What other charities are there besides schools?—There are those for the poor and the sick and visiting. The money raised for the relief of the poor and sick is what you can judge by better than the poor. In Saint Luke's district last year they raised for the District Visiting Society 19*l.* by subscriptions, and their alms amounted to 41*l.*, which was really a large sum. About 30*l.* were sent me by friends out of the district, the rest I supplied. I allow about 70*l.* or 80*l.* a year.

314. Would the subdivided parishes derive no assistance from the District Visiting Relief Society?—They might apply to it. At present we receive no assistance from any society; we raise everything in our own parish, and we ought to do so.

315. Do not you think that a clergyman, placed as these would be, would have a great power of raising money if he bestirred himself?—I can only judge from what we have there. I do not see how the experiment could be better tried. The late incumbent was very much liked as a preacher, and yet the church would not fill, and the money could not be raised. The present incumbent is a good preacher and a most indefatigable man, and he and his curate are hard at work all day long; and the effect is just this—he has neither support himself, nor can he support his charities.

316. What is the provision for Oxford Street as to part of the parish churches?—There is no church nearer than the one in Berwick Street, and the chapel of Archbishop Tennyson in Regent Street.

317. You would put a church somewhere near there?—Yes, at the end of Marlborough Street and Poland Street.

318. That would be self-supporting?—I should think it would.

319. The Regent Street district would be a good one, and the Pall Mall district would be a good one?—Yes; but you do not want a church in Pall Mall at all.

320. Those districts would be self-supporting?—Yes.

321. Berwick Street would be almost the only poor one, would it not?—No; you will find districts south of it quite as bad.

322. The chief disadvantage under which the incumbent of St. Luke's labours is, that he must not only obtain an income for himself out of his pew rents, but also pay all the expenses of the church?—Yes, that is so; and he objects rightly to make a collection for the expenses of the church; he would not get much, and it is a most disagreeable way of begging; it would always appear like begging for himself.

323. You have stated that there are eight clergymen doing pastoral work?—Yes; there is a rector, three curates, two ministers of Archbishop Tennyson's chapel, the incumbent of St. Luke's, and his curate.

324. What is the amount of the collections for all the schools in the parish?—1,671*l.* That will include the collections in the churches, donations, and subscriptions.

325. In the whole parish?—Yes.

326. How much for the visiting and sick societies?—I cannot tell you.

327. Do the school children pay any money towards the support of the school?—We have the national schools at which they pay, the infant schools at which they pay, and a sort of ragged school at which they do not pay.

328. What is the total amount you receive in the parish from the children in a year?—I can hardly say.

329. You have stated that 1,671*l.* are raised in the schools. How many children are there in the schools?—About 1,200 day scholars; and besides that we have two endowed schools for the poor.

330. What lecturers have you in your parish, and how are they supported?—Clergymen not having pastoral charge.

331. Yes?—There are no lecturers properly so called; there are the ministers of those two chapels, Saint Philip's and York Street chapel, who have no pastoral charge.

332. How are they supported?—The minister of Saint Philip's is supported by the pew rents, or an allowance out of them; the other is a proprietary chapel, and the clergyman pays a certain rent.

333. Have you not a third service at the church which is supported by the additional pew rents?—There is a third service, and there are additional pew rents, but they do not support it; they amount to 30*l.* a year, and the lecturer receives 80*l.*

334. Does he receive the pew rents in part of his stipend?—No, he does not; he is paid 80*l.* by the churchwarden who receives the pew rents.

The Reverend WILLIAM ELISHA LAW FAULKNER, Incumbent of Clerkenwell, examined.

335. What is the amount of the population in your district?—56,756 is the best calculation I can make according to the last census of 1841.

336. Do you suppose that it has increased since that time?—I have included what I think the increase amounts to.

337. What is the amount of church accommodation?—There are in the parish of Clerkenwell five churches, Saint James's Church, Saint James, Saint John's, Saint Mark's, and Saint Philip's, Pentonville; there is a part of the ground that belongs to Muswell Hill, only nine houses. I suppose that is not to be contemplated in any way.

338. Have you sent in your return to the secretary?—I will put this paper in, which the vestry clerk sent me to-day. I have been looking at it as close as I can, and think his returns

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returns are as fair and as near to the mark as possible. There is one part of the parish of Saint James Clerkenwell, Saint John's church, which is quite peculiar, because the incumbency of Saint John's is in the gift of the Lord Chancellor, and he has a right to exercise any offices which he pleases in Saint John's church; that is a rectory, the others are perpetual curacies. My brother-in-law is the incumbent of that place. I take no fees from him. It is a nondescript sort of parish altogether, it is diverse from all the others. The number of voters are about 8,000. The patrons are the whole body of the large parish of Clerkenwell.

339. What is the character of those subdivisions; are they all the same?—No, they differ in point of number.

340. But in power and character?—Saint James's Church is the mother church, and that is the poorest part of the parish. Saint John's is confessedly, it is almost now abounding with poor; there is hardly anybody round that neighbourhood that lives in it, except those in absolute want and distress, letting out the lowest tenements that can possibly be.

341. Are those sub-divisions now distinct parishes?—They are what we call district parishes.

342. Saint Mark's and Saint Philip's are distinct parishes?—They are.

343. What is Saint James's Chapel?—It is a chapel of ease to Pentonville, in the gift of the incumbent. It has no marked out district, neither is there any marked out district for that part of Saint James's. We call it Saint James's. We have no authorized map where we can decypher Saint James's from the rest. They all vote, from one end of the parish to the other when a living is vacant.

344. Is there any endowment?—40*l.* 16*s.*; 33*l.* of which some person had left for the minister, and that is the whole that he has. The income of that church is not more than 170*l.*

345. The mother church?—Yes.

346. Who appoints to the district parish churches?—The Lord Chancellor has the gift of Saint John's still. The Bishop of London has now the patronage of Saint Mark's and Saint Philip's. With regard to Saint Philip's, Pentonville chapel is merely a curacy.

347. They cannot be, properly speaking, district parish churches, because the incumbent's living would be an incumbency?—So I have been told. It has never been so acted upon in these district churches, the last of which the bishop gave to Mr. Watson when he was first only a district minister. I believe I have no right to exercise any spiritual office in any except Saint James's, Pentonville. It has been contended that I have, but I never tried it.

348. You have no church rate, have you?—Such a thing may happen, but it would be almost fighting to bloodshed.

349. That was attempted four or five years ago, was it not?—Yes.

350. And it failed?—Yes.

351. Are marriages solemnized in all the churches?—Yes, in all.

352. Pentonville chapel included?—Yes, Saint James's Pentonville. That holds about 700*l.*, besides free seats.

353. Marriages are solemnized there?—Yes, in every one.

354. By whom are the fees received?—The fees of Pentonville chapel go to the minister of Saint James's church.

355. And in the other churches they receive their own fees?—They do now, but not till the others were made regular district churches.

356. What is the entire income of Saint James's church?—With Pentonville annexed to it, I should say, the last farthing, and without a house, about 240*l.* a year.

357. From what source is that derived?—From fees; we have no other sources.

358. Give the different items, if you please?—Marriages, baptisms, burials, and churchings.

359. Are there not pew rents?—Yes; I include that. 250*l.* would be the last shilling.

360. How are the pew rents of the mother church applied?—To pay for the rate to keep the church in order.

361. What do they produce?—Something very small indeed. In Saint James's church there is no definite district, though they call it Saint James's; it lies nearer than the other parts.

362. If there are districts defined for Saint Mark's, Saint Philip's, and Saint John's, then Saint James's would of course be the entire residue of the parish?—Yes, of that part.

363. Do you consider yourself as having the care of souls over the whole of the population?—No, I dare not go into any one of the other districts. When I took the living, I only took the mother church.

364. By what rules do you define the limits of your own jurisdiction, if there are no districts regularly assigned to those other churches?—I cannot tell where we should say Saint James's ends; it is a nondescript sort of concern from beginning to end.

365. Do

365. Do you know what is the amount of population under your especial charge?—I should say that Saint James's contained about 16,000.

366. Saint Mark's has no endowment, has it?—No; but they have the pew rents, which I have not for Saint James's church.

367. Do you think any further subdivision necessary?—Not without it was something like an endowment.

368. But with an endowment?—I think it would be. The mother church is the worst of all. The income of Mr. Watson is about 535*l.* a year from pew rents and other fees. Then I suppose Mr. the new incumbent, will receive about the same, while the clergyman of the mother church does not receive above 240*l.* altogether, without a house. There is no house for any one minister in the parish, and the fees have fallen off amazingly, —100*l.* a year since I have been in the living.

369. What is that owing to?—They have moved out of the district, and have gone to Myddleton Street, the genteel part of the inhabitants. When that division was made, so far as it is, it took away a good many from the mother church.

370. There is not much more vacant ground in the parish, is there?—There is not.

371. Will you state what amount of money is collected which goes towards defraying the expenses of the church?—I should not think more than 40*l.* or 50*l.* a year; it may be 60*l.*; if it comes to 70*l.* that is the outside. The parishioners feel very little interest in taking pews, since they know that they can apply to the who must repair it whether they will or not.

372. Are the servants of the church paid out of any other fund?—By the church-wardens.

373. Out of what fund?—By the church rate, as it is called.

374. You say that there is none?—They have some way of slipping in under the Trustee Act, whereby they just do it, and they have the pews in their hands, and they get something by them perhaps; but that I think has generally supplied them; or they make up the rest in that kind of way. It is a perfect nondescript parish,—that the rector standing in the parish should have the title of rector, and all the others only as district churches. I could perform the service in St. John's, I am told. I do not know; it never was tried.

375. How many services have you in the parish church on Sunday?—Three in every part of the parish, except Mr. Watson's.

376. How is the evening service supported in your church?—By letting the sittings at 1*s.* 3*d.* a quarter expressly for that purpose, by Act of Parliament.

377. What amount is produced by that?—The minister who preaches there has never had more than 30*l.*, nor any one who has preached there.

378. He receives the whole of the pew rents, does he not?—Yes, at 1*s.* 3*d.* a quarter.

379. Does he pay out of those pew rents, for the expenses of the church?—Yes, I am sure of it.

380. What accommodation is there for the adult poor in all the churches?—It is pretty well in Saint James's. I would say that there are 2,600 persons. For the poor in Saint John's 800, 150, and in St. Philip's 1,200, and 450 for the poor of Saint Mark's; 2,700, I think there are, and then there is Pentonville chapel, which has about 760.

381. How many children do you take out of the 2,600?—They are divided, and a large portion goes to Saint Mark's; it is more commodious; and there are Sunday Schools. Saint Mark's has no sort of endowment, and is completely flung upon the popularity of the person who ministers there.

382. It is clear that what is done in your parish must be done from without?—Yes. I tried very hard about a year ago for them to give me the pews, and I offered them a certain sum for so doing. I was out-voted, except by, I believe, two persons, at the trustee board.

383. Saint Mark's and Saint Philip's were both built by public funds, were they not?—I suppose they were, but the churches are very well attended, and the schools are the most creditable schools in the parish, both in the way of building, and the conducting of them is done with great care and attention, and every thing which is good.

384. The schools are supported by the churches jointly, are they not?—Exactly so, only that they have their sub-Sunday schools under them.

385. Have they a subscription list for the schools?—Yes.

386. How much does that raise per annum?—I should think about 200*l.* a year. The large school is for the whole of the parishes, there is no distinction.

387. What other means have they of supporting that?—We have some endowment. A little fell in by the death of some benevolent person, who has left about 50*l.* or 60*l.* a year.

388. How many children are there in the schools in the whole. Give the day schools first?—I am hardly prepared to say. I should say about 400; perhaps more than that. I should think more than that, but not more than 500; I think not.

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389. Out of what population?—Of the whole parish. I now speak of only the larg schools which are in Myddleton Square, not of the others. There is one more, Saint John's Each has Sunday Schools, and some have their daily schools. Mr. Watson's has.

Adjourned to Tuesday next.

Tuesday, 15th May 1849.

The BISHOP OF LICHFIELD in the Chair.

Rev. Dr. Spry.
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The REV. DR. SPRY examined.

390. WHAT is the amount of population in your parish?—The population of the parish as returned at present is only from conjecture, because a certain time has elapsed since the returns were made, and the conjectured or presumed population at present is put down at 144,400.

391. Is that for the whole ancient parish of Marylebone?—Yes. I have here got a presumed statement with respect to the different districts, which I will read. It is here stated that the rectory,—that is, the central portion of the parish, which has been left to to the rectory,—is presumed now to contain 28,200. Saint Mary's district, which lies to the west of it, is presumed to contain 26,100. All Souls, which lies to the east of it, contains 23,300. Out of that a district parish has been taken called Saint Andrews, which has, I think, an assumed population of 6,000, which would reduce All Souls to that extent. Christ Church is estimated to contain 56,600; but there have been several districts taken out of that part, and which I shall be able to explain to the Commissioners, which will reduce it by, perhaps, about 12,000, leaving 44,600 for Christ Church. Trinity, the smallest of the whole, is computed to contain 10,200. Making, in the whole, 144,400; but that must be only considered as an approximation to the truth. We cannot tell what may have happened since 1841, the time when the last census was taken, and 1851.

392. In what way was that subdivision made to which you have referred; was it by Act of Parliament?—The subdivision of the parish into a rectory and four districts was made by the 1 & 2 Geo. 4., and since that under different Acts of Parliament. A district has been taken out of All Souls. The district parish of St. Andrews, it is called. Two churches are built, and another is building in Christ Church. There are also two chapels in that district. There may, therefore, when these arrangements are completed, be five districts taken out of that large portion of the parish. Christ Church is that which lies to the north-west.

393. What number of districts under all the different heads is the parish of Marylebone divided into?—Under the different heads at this time there would be about ten, I should think.

394. Including those three churches that you have mentioned?—Yes; and those chapels in Christ Church.

395. You have churches with no districts attached to them?—Yes. In the rectory there is first of all the rector's church, which contains 2,394 persons, of which 1,450 are free. There is the parish chapel, which was the old parish church, which now contains 377 persons, of which 77 are free. There is Portman Chapel, which is a proprietary chapel but not consecrated, and that is estimated to contain 1,100 persons, and there are twenty free sittings in it; there may be more. There is also Saint James's, a consecrated chapel, containing 900 sittings, of which 200 are free. The effect of this is that the whole accommodation for the portion allotted to the rector is 4,761, of which 1,727 are free, exclusive of the number of free sittings in Portman Chapel, of which I have no accurate account. The presumed population is 28,200, and that is the situation of that portion of the parish; and I am sorry to say that I am quite convinced that it is impossible to obtain a site for a church in that district. I have been trying for fifteen years to obtain a site, and I have not succeeded, nor do I believe that any sum of money would procure one. The reason is this:—The whole of that district belongs to the Duke of Portland, to Lord Portman, and to Mr. Hope, a private gentleman; there may, possibly, be some two or three small spots of freehold ground besides, but I know not the owner; the whole of that ground is let by the ground landlords upon building leases; those leases have been sub-let over and over again, and in such a way that I have found it impossible to buy any portion of it sufficient to build a church upon, go where you will; therefore you will find that you must deal with five or six or more different people, one under the other, for the site of ground you want, every one of whom will probably take advantage of you.

396. If you buy No. 1., No. 2. knows that you must buy him?—Yes, of course, and he will charge you a great deal more in consequence.

397. I presume

397. I presume that such a power as is given under Railway Bills would be necessary for the purpose of obtaining a site for a church?—Yes, no doubt of it; nothing short of compulsory powers will enable you to obtain it. It is not money that will do it. You may deal with one man reasonably, but you will find another man who will deal with you most unreasonably; and I venture to say that I cannot anticipate the possibility of getting ground for a church for less than from 5,000*l.* to 6,000*l.*; I mean ground sufficient to build a church upon to hold 1,200 people; even if it could be bought at all.

398. You have mentioned how many churches there were in the old rectory district. What places of worship are there in the others?—All Souls holds 1,606 persons, of which 616 are free. There is a chapel called St. Peter's Chapel, a consecrated chapel, which is in the hands of the Commissioners of Woods and Forests and the rector of All Souls, and that holds 1,000 persons and has 150 free sittings. That is very peculiarly circumstanced; that chapel is so completely on the edge of All Souls district that my district runs round it, the walls of the chapel are the division on two sides, north and east, between the two districts; the consequence of which is, that it is available partly to both and exclusively to neither, inasmuch as many of the sitters are inhabitants of my district and many of All Souls, and it is so situated that a district could not conveniently or usefully be attached to it from All Souls, because not any of the poor of All Souls live in the neighbourhood of the chapel. Near to All Souls Church is St. Paul's Chapel, which is exactly under the same circumstances. It is a consecrated chapel, held under the Commissioners of Woods and the rector; it contains accommodation for 932 persons; 186 are free; it is entirely surrounded by comparatively wealthy inhabitants, while the poor are all at a distance; so that no district can be usefully assigned to that chapel. There is also Margaret's Chapel, that stands in Margaret Street, which is a proprietary chapel. That holds 500 persons, and the return made to me a short time ago was that there were only forty-two free sittings; I do not know how it may be altered now. Mr. Oakley formerly had this chapel; the present incumbent minister is Mr. Richards. There has been a church built; and a district taken out of All Souls, called St. Andrew's,—it is made a district parish under the Act of Parliament,—which diminishes the number of inhabitants in All Souls district by the amount of the inhabitants of this new district.

399. The last is under Sir Robert Peel's Act?—Yes; the number of inhabitants (independently of that district) of All Souls is 4,040.

400. Will you specify whether you count sittings for schools among free sittings or not?—Yes, certainly. I can tell you exactly the number of children that are provided for, according to the returns made to me, which we reckoned usually among the free sittings; but the practice at the Church Building Society is to consider them as one third less than the number specified, in order to show the number that the church will hold for adults.

401. 300 children you reckon equal to 200 adults?—Yes.

402. Are there not some churches under your jurisdiction not so separate and distinct but that they are still under your control and superintendence?—There is nothing under my control and superintendence except my own district, and the Chapel of St. John's in St. John's Wood, and that is a chapel of ease to me, because that was a chapel built for the purpose of burying the dead of the parish, and as the whole of the funerals belong to the rector, that chapel was made a chapel of ease to the rectory. The Crown has the appointment of the clergyman; I have the direction of the duty, and the whole management of the service of the chapel.

403. But that has no district?—No; not assigned to it by me at all.

404. He is not your curate? Yes. I appoint him to perform any duties I please in the chapel.

405. But not out of the chapel?—No.

406. He has no cure of souls?—None whatever.

407. In the eye of the law he is a stipendiary curate?—Yes; stipendiary curate of that chapel, not paid by the parish, which is appropriated to me by law for the burial of the dead in the cemetery attached to it, in which he has a house in which he resides, and he performs such duties in the chapel as I may appoint.

408. With respect to that old parish church of yours adjoining the rectory church; is not that also a chapel of ease?—That is entirely a chapel of ease; so is Saint James's Chapel a chapel of ease to the rectory.

409. That is consecrated, is it not?—Yes.

410. They are under your jurisdiction entirely?—Yes.

411. You have three, besides the church, the ministers of which are under your jurisdiction and control?—Yes; excepting that to Saint James's Chapel I cannot appoint a district; I cannot call upon the clergyman of that chapel to take a district.

412. But he is a stipendiary curate nominated by you?—No; he is the incumbent of that chapel nominated by the Crown, receiving, under the Act of Parliament, a certain portion of the pew-rents, the whole of which are under the control of the First Commissioner of Woods and Forests and the rector.

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413. Then how is he under your control?—Because it is made by Act of Parliament a chapel of ease to me.

414. You could officiate there if you pleased?—Yes.

415. Could you call upon him to take your place in your church?—No.

416. You consider him as having no cure of souls?—Not in the least; nor could I call upon him to visit a single poor person.

417. In your judgment, do you think it an advantage to your parish of Marylebone that there should be these purely independent divisions of which you have spoken, in preference to there being so many chapels of ease under the care of the rector?—I should think it would be very desirable indeed to leave it as it is. I think that the rector of Marylebone, as he is called by Act of Parliament, though he has nothing to do except with the particular portion containing about 30,000 under his care, has quite as many under his charge as it can be fairly expected he should be responsible for as their superintending pastor. I have four clergymen under me engaged in parochial visitation in my district, and as that lies in a comparatively small compass, and the district is so densely peopled, I find no difficulty whatever, with the assistance of those four clergymen, who are very active persons, in attending to this pastoral charge. Every one has got his district, and knows every house that he has to visit. I have divided my portion of it into four parts, and every clergyman has a certain number of streets and houses given him to visit, and a list of these is printed, and each of the four clergymen has a copy. One of these printed lists is at the parish church also. There is no difficulty in providing that every poor person requiring a clergyman shall be visited immediately; and in order to induce the poor to apply, I give every one of these clergymen money out of the sacramental fund, which fortunately is a large one, to distribute as he may see occasion.

418. Have you any district visitors?—Yes; we have a very active district visiting society, which visits all the poor that require temporary assistance merely, and there is attached to that a committee of ladies who visit all the lying-in cases, and assist the poor women with linen and with money, with food and every thing that is necessary, and besides that there are several ladies, eight or ten, very active and intelligent persons, who go round with my curates whenever they are required, and take very great care about the poor.

419. Are these district societies entirely for the whole of the rector's district, or are they subdivided, and connected with the clergymen of the respective districts?—We have in fact two bodies operating separately, and yet to a certain degree in concert. The clergy act in their capacity, and have all of them money to assist, and the district society acts in its capacity, and has also money to lay out. The ladies, both under the district society and under me, are assisting us in every way in which they can.

420. Are they all responsible to the rector, or are they responsible to the clergymen of the respective districts which you have assigned to each clergyman?—They act with the clergymen of the respective districts, but they are all responsible to me.

421. Do they meet at the rectory?—We meet regularly during the winter season every fortnight.

422. That is for the whole rectory?—Yes. The district society meets every fortnight regularly.

423. Is it desirable that your portion of the parish, that which still remains attached to the rectory and under your jurisdiction, should be further divided into districts, under whatever name they might be, which should be as independent of you as Trinity Church is, for example, or All Souls?—I should say no; that it would be much better as it is.

424. For what reason?—Because I am satisfied that one mind conducts the business upon a more correct and regular principle than it would be conducted by a number.

425. It is to be presumed that you would have some limit to the number, or else, upon the same principle, you might have wished that the whole parish of Marylebone had never been divided as it has been?—No; I do not quite say that; there is a difference between managing 30,000 and 150,000.

426. You think that your present 30,000 are as well managed, with the assistance you have spoken of, as they would be if the district were subdivided into four independent charges, such as I referred to before, All Souls or Trinity Church?—I should think so, considering the area; a great deal depends upon that; but I speak only of visitation.

427. What number of sick persons on an average are there in the whole of that district?—I cannot answer that question.

428. What number of sick persons on an average are daily visited?—That I cannot tell, as I have no documents with me. The clergyman's private visiting memoranda, would show it.

429. Would not that show a necessity for a subdivision?—Not at all. The clergy go wherever they are wanted; and when once a clergyman knows such a place as York Court, for instance, which is partly inhabited by poor persons of the most wretched description, he knows every person in that court, and knows what their wants are, and he goes there when necessary.

430. What are their wants principally which call for the attendance of a clergyman?—I am sorry to say that frequently their wants are more temporal than spiritual, if they are listened to, but we combine the two as well as we can.

431. What control do you exercise over your clergymen in the management of so large a population as 30,000; have you visited the whole 30,000 yourself?—No; how can you suppose it?

432. If you have the spiritual charge of them, I do suppose it. Will you state to this Commission what control you exercise over your curates?—They can do nothing without my knowledge; they never venture to do anything without coming to me to take directions as to what they shall do.

433. What assurance have you that they have made the visitations you have spoken of?—Because they keep books in which they are entered.

434. What assurance have you that those books are correctly kept?—Because I have confidence in a gentleman that he would not tell me a falsehood.

435. It is your confidence in the party that you appoint?—Yes, undoubtedly.

436. But from no knowledge of your own?—It must of course be so, to a certain extent.

437. Is it not your opinion that if parishes were sub-divided, and brought down to three or four thousand, that the minister at the head of it might have a personal knowledge of nearly everybody resident within the district?—I do not believe that he could.

438. Is not such the case in many parishes in London, where the population is within that number?—Certainly not, within my own knowledge. One great difficulty with respect to my parish would be this, that the people are continually fluctuating; they often do not live in the same house more than six months together; everywhere they are going about from place to place. I know that distinctly, because at every Christmas I give away a certain proportion of the sacramental alms to persons that are down in my books as persons that are fit to receive it. Some of them have been in my books for many years. There is a regular inquiry made every year as to what their conduct has been, and whether they deserve to have the same sum given them that had been usually given, or whether they deserve to have more or less; and I know that those people are continually changing their habitations.

439. Does not that very much increase the amount of spiritual destitution, and very much increase the necessity for having additional clergymen to work that parish?—It operates in this way, that no clergyman could absolutely ascertain these facts as he could in a country place, where a man lives in the same house for a long time; but as the poor are circumstanced in London, they are continually fluctuating from one portion of a parish to another; and if I could become acquainted with 30,000 people, of those 30,000 a considerable number would not remain my parishioners for a whole year.

440. Are you not of opinion that an individual at the head of a large parish like Marylebone ought to desire subdivision, in order that he might become personally acquainted with those committed to his spiritual charge?—I can only say this, that under the tremendous difficulties that a clergyman is subject to in London he must do the best that he can. I believe it is totally impossible, under any circumstances, unless you will find the means of building churches, which I cannot find, and find the means of maintaining clergymen, which I have no idea you can find. I do not think you can sub divide in that way in a parish like mine. You could not build churches unless you could find sites, you could not provide clergymen unless you could find income for them; and, after all, clergymen in London would have but a very limited control.

441. You admit that the difficulty to which a London clergyman is exposed does arise from the very great extent of the parish and the great number of the population?—I admit that, to a very great extent.

442. Is not that a difficulty for which it is important to find a remedy?—I admit undoubtedly, and everybody will at once, that if London could be divided so that every clergyman would have no more under his control than he could personally visit it would be a very great advantage. I do not deny that; but, under the circumstances of the case, I believe it is better that a large district should be under the control of one person having a good many under him than to attempt to divide where you cannot succeed in producing the desired effect.

443. Supposing it were possible in your district over which you have the entire cure of souls, now containing 30,000, to provide churches so situated as to accommodate those separate divisions that you have now allotted to your four curates; do you not conceive that there would be a great advantage to your population, and a great relief to yourself?—Of course, no doubt of that, supposing you could do it.

444. Then, supposing those churches to be provided, do you conceive that it would be better that they should be served by entirely separate and independent incumbents, than to be still served by gentlemen standing in the relation of stipendiary curates to the rector?—No. I should say that standing in the relation of stipendiary curates to the rector would be a better mode than the other.

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445. On what ground do you express that opinion?—Because I think that one superintending head will keep the whole arrangement in much better order than it would be kept by a number of independent persons. You must give them a certain degree of influence over the people, which they really would not be able to maintain unless you gave them a status, which you cannot anticipate the possibility of giving. The poor, and the rich too, do look up to a rector of a large parish in a way that they would not look up to a person having merely his small parish, with a very trifling income, and no means of assisting the poor.

446. But that advantage, when a parish is so large, is enjoyed by a very few, for necessarily the person seen would be one of the four curates, and not the rector?—They come to me on all occasions. The Commissioners do not suppose that there is any poor person who does not feel that he has a right to come to my door at any time.

447. If the parish were subdivided into districts containing 4,000, and there were seven incumbents, with seven curates, making fourteen clergymen, that advantage, in looking up to the rector, and having a personal acquaintance with the rector, would be greatly increased? —Yes. I do not deny that; but I cannot see the means by which you could do it.

448. Do the Commissioners understand you to say that these incumbents would not have the same means of giving temporal aid which the rector has?—Yes.

449 In assigning to a certain number of clergymen a certain number of churches, you are of opinion that they are more efficient acting under a head than they would be in so many independent spheres of action?—I think so.

450. Do not you tnink that the pastoral connexion formed between an individual in an independent parish where the minister has just a manageable number of inhabitants to deal with would beget the influence and originate the means of meeting the temporal wants of the people better than the mere system of dealing out that help through a curate?—It is exceedingly difficult to answer a question of that kind. I am perpetually met, in my own mind, with the difficulty that you cannot do it. If you ask me, as an abstract question, no doubt, I will admit it at once, that Lord Ashley's plan, if it can be carried into effect, would be a most beneficial thing to the whole country.

451. Apart from the impossibility of doing it in particular localities, you approve of the principle of the thing?—Undoubtedly I do. I should be inclined to say so, with a certain allowance, as I think that 4,000 people in a town like London would be too small. With respect to my own parish, it appears to me to be really a matter of difficulty, and I am sure the Commissioners will take this into consideration at once. In the first place, I believe it to be totally impossible, unless you have a compulsory Act of Parliament, to find ground to build churches upon. I say that from my own experience. I have been now twenty-four years in that parish, and I have laboured incessantly for the whole time to get a church, and I never could. I believe it to be quite impossible. In the outskirts in Christ Church district it is of course possible in parts which are not built over.

452. Would it be desirable to convert these proprietary chapels into churches with cure of souls?—You might certainly do that, and I should be very glad. St. James's Chapel is a chapel under the First Commissioner of Woods and myself; it is now vacant, and I should be glad if a clergyman is appointed. I should hope to induce him to take a district. I should like to have five districts instead of four; but how to provide for the income I do not know. The whole of the income of that chapel depends entirely upon the pew-rents. What is the effect of an income of that kind? The clergyman who had the charge of St. Jame's Chapel during the life of the late incumbent, who is just dead, happened to be independent; he is a very excellent man, and was a very popular preacher; that chapel under his ministry was entirely full, and the consequence was, that out of the income of that chapel we were able, not only to pay the incumbent what the Act of Parliament required, but we actually had power to lay by about 2,500*l.* which we do not know what to do with; that is, the Act does not allow us to do anything with it. There it is; but since the clergyman who was the officiating clergyman under the late incumbent, from ill health and other circumstances, quitted it, in nine months the income diminished 180*l.* That shows what is the nature of an income derived from pew-rents. Another district chapel held in the same way in All Souls has so completely gone down, in consequence of the pew-rents being the only income, so that the clergyman, who ought to have 350*l.* by the Act, has to content himself with 150*l.*, and in a short time the Commissioners will not know how to maintain the chapel at all.

453. Is not that pressure the result of purely congregational connexion, unassisted by any parochial ties?—Undoubtedly it may be so; but if it were otherwise the poor could not add to the income. You must have some certain income independent of pew-rents, or it would be impossible to calculate upon the means of supporting a chapel.

454. Where the parochial tie is assisted by the rites of the Church being celebrated within those parishes, there are ties formed more important rather than those which depend upon the qualifications necessary to make a popular preacher?—Yes; but I do not think that would add to the income.

455. Do not you believe that very often, with that sort of tie, persons contribute more largely to the support of the many?—I have no reason to say so. I know that the Easter offerings, which are the other source of income, are falling off; so much so that they cannot be considered as any source of income.

456. In

456. In whose behalf are those Easter offerings made—For me, in my district.

457. Owing of course to the extent of the district over which you operate, it is impossible there can be the same closeness of tie between the congregation and their spiritual head?—Of course not.

458. I am supposing a case where there is that close parochial tie, where poor persons frequent a given place of worship, having all those family ties and connexions established?—I think that would operate to a certain extent, but not to that extent that could be safely calculated on as a source of income.

459. Do not you consider that in those cases the Easter offerings would be more largely contributed?—I do not think it could be done. I am going back now to the subject of my own district being subdivided. I think you could not have a larger number of giving persons. A very large proportion of the people would be poor, go where you would. I could not divide my district into seven, or many portions must consist of persons entirely poor, or little tradesmen, who would give their fourpence or a shilling, but never any more, and perhaps could not afford more.

460. Do not you think that if their families were connected with the church by strictly parochial ties that they would willingly contribute their 4*s.* or 5*s.* a year?—I am afraid they could not. The Commissioners have very little idea what the state of the little tradesman in London is. The distress of that class of people at this time is greater than they can possibly conceive. A very strong effect was produced on my mind by a circumstance which occurred the other day. The Commissioners for building the baths and wash-houses were considering the officers whom we were to appoint, and we proposed to give the superintendent and his wife 100*l.* a year. To our astonishment, a tradesaan, who had held his head up in his little way as a respectable and as a responsible man, came and begged for the office. He was asked, "Do you know what the income is; it is only to be 100*l.* a year?" And he said, "I should be most delighted to have 100*l.* a year." The Commissioners will judge what the circumstances of this class of persons must be if a tradesman, keeping a second-rate shop, would rather take 100*l.* a year than continue his business. How little, under such circumstances, would such persons be able to contribute.

461. Are your sacramental alms given wholly to the poor?—The whole, generally; but sometimes a small sum is given to assist a school.

462. You spoke of them as being distributed by your curates?—Yes, a proportion of them. The way in which they are distributed, with the consent of the churchwardens, is this:—Every Christmas we have, as I said before, a certain number of persons upon our list; we give away among them about 120*l.* or 130*l.* at once; perhaps, in the whole, about 150*l.* in a year, and then persons expect that little payment at Christmas; it helps them in their rent; the rest is given away by my curates; every one of them has a certain sum of money in his hands, which he accounts to me for, and as soon as it is spent I give him more; I give to each 20*l.* at a time, and by that means they have always money in their hands; and the whole of the sacramental money is distributed in that way, except that occasionally (as I may say that all our schools are in a sad state of destitution) it will happen that we cannot carry on some of them without help, and in such cases I give 10*l.* or 15*l.* or 20*l.* in aid of their funds.

463. What is the whole amount of your sacramental alms?—From 400*l.* to 500*l.* a year.

464. Instead of one church for those 30,000 people, supposing the parish were divided into four districts, and that each church was an independent church, having a population of 7,000, rich and poor, attached to it; would not the amount of the sacramental alms be greatly increased?—I do not know; but I should suppose not greatly; all the sacramental alms of the chapels in my district come to me, and therefore I have all that comes from the communicants in the whole district.

465. You would obtain an additional number of communicants by giving additional churches?—I should hope that we should.

466. Does the sum of 500*l.* include all the sacramental alms of all the churches?—I now speak in round numbers.

467. Will you state whether those are the alms of the parish church, or the alms of all?—They are alms of the parish church, Saint James's Chapel, Portman Chapel, and the parish chapel.

468. Not Saint Peter's?—It does not belong to my district. When I say 500*l.*, you must take it only as an approximation to the truth, as I have not the account with me.

469. Have you more schools than one for your parish?—The schools that are partly or entirely under my direction, with the aid of their committees, are, first of all the parochial charity school for girls, which is for the whole parish, my national school, and my infant school; and, I am sorry to say, considering that our population is a rich population, I have never known the time when all but the parochial school have not been in debt and difficulty to a certain extent, and even that school is sometimes in the same state.

470. Do you believe that the rector of Saint Mary's is collecting money, and remitting it to the poorer district of Bethnal Green?—I do not know that this is so.

 471. If

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471. If you were to multiply the number of clergy in the parish of Marylebone, do not you think that they would raise an additional interest in that parish for spiritual purposes?—I know this, that of course in proportion as you increase your churches and increase the number of clergymen officiating in those churches so do you increase Church feeling, the number of Church communicants, and Church congregations, and you increase the income arising from their goodwill; there is no question about it.

472. You have a greater hold upon them?—Yes; it must be so; but my difficulty is, the impossibility of effecting it.

473. You do not doubt that it would be a good thing if it could be effected?—No doubt of it; but suppose you could get churches, how are you to provide incomes for the clergy? I have no desire to conceal from this Commission what exactly is the income of the rector of Marylebone. You will be astonished when I say that I believe it is not only not too much, but in fact that no future rector of Marylebone will be able to live upon it. When I came to the rectory of Marylebone I could return as the income of the rector of Marylebone from 1,800*l.* to 1,900*l.* The cemetery at Kensall Green has deprived him of 300*l.* a year, and the gross receipt of my rectory which I now return for the income tax amounts to from 1,500*l.* to 1,600*l.* a year. Before I receive a farthing I pay nearly 600*l.* out of it. I pay my curates; and I have no house. The curates and house-rent cost me very nearly 600*l.* a year, and there is nothing left for the rector of Marylebone more than 1,000*l.* a year. I do not hesitate to say that it is my conviction that if the rectory of Marylebone is to continue what it is and has been, that is not enough for the rector to live upon; with the demands upon him for charities of all kinds, and for payments of all kinds, it is really not enough to maintain his situation. Perhaps I am saying what may astonish some persons; but this is really my conviction. I only ask the Commissioners to consider, before they talk of dividing such a parish as that, where you will find a sufficient income for the clergy. The small income of 150*l.* or 200*l.* a year, though it may supply a curate's wants, cannot do for an incumbent. My curates are not asked to contribute one shilling to the relief of the poor; those funds are supplied from other sources; and my full conviction is, that those clergymen, from their attention and kindness to the poor, have a great influence and hold over them. I believe that they are beloved and looked up to by the poor to an extent that is quite gratifying.

474. If those gentlemen were acting on their own behalf, supposing their number increased, and the means found for their support, do you consider that the contributions of the people would be greater?—Not in the parish of Marylebone, and not in any parish where a very large proportion of the people consists of tradesmen. They do not generally contribute to the Church.

475. Supposing that you could find the means of endowing seven clergymen, would it not be worth while to make a great effort to obtain churches for them?—If you could contrive to divide my parish into six or seven districts, and find adequate incomes and churches for the people to go to, you would do an enormous good, there is no question about it. I should be very happy to see that; but I believe it to be impossible, unless you have means of which I know not. I can find none. My national school is at this time 300*l.* in debt, and I fear we cannot carry it on, unless the rector and some other gentleman become personally responsible to a banker for the money to defray it.

476. What population does that school provide for?—That school can receive as many as may be sent to it. We have between 300 and 400 there, and we could take 1,000. But the fact is, that people like to conduct their charities in their own way. A little time ago I made inquiries to ascertain what schools there were within a certain distance round the national school of my own district, and I found that there were eighteen schools maintained by persons who liked to have the management of them entirely themselves. The good is done, and I am glad that it is done.

477. What is the precise number of children in the parochial schools?—I should say that in the national school at present there are between 300 and 400; in the infant school, 220; and in the parochial school for girls, where they are boarded, educated, and maintained altogether, there are 135.

478. Is that for your district of 30,000?—It is built in my own district. It is for the whole parish of Marylebone; and there never was a school that did more good. We look after these girls after they quit us at fifteen. They come back to us perpetually with good characters from service, and I do not remember an instance of one of those girls turning out ill.

479. You have no girls' school in Marylebone but that one?—Yes; a girls' school belonging to the national school, which is for both boys and girls.

480. Have you any statement by which you could show the proportion of poor in your district, as compared with the whole population?—I am afraid that it would be difficult to obtain that. The census is so taken that it does not enable us to obtain such a return. I should say, speaking roughly, that out of 30,000 at least from 15,000 to 20,000 were poor.

481. Am I stating your opinion correctly, when I say that, with the reservation as to not bringing the greater rectories and greater vicarages down to the dead level of 4,000, supposing the means could be found, you are favourable to the principle of subdivision?—Most undoubtedly.

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482. What proportion of your 30,000 are Romanists or dissenters?—I cannot speak positively to that at all. I believe that there are a great many dissenters, but not many Romanists.

483. You have not any masses of Romanists?—Yes, among the Irish we have.

484. Who are not accessible to the ordinary parochial visitation?—No; but they are always ready to receive alms from the clergy. There is a large chapel in Spanish Place. There are two very active priests there, and I believe that there are a great many Irish poor belonging to them.

485. What is the number of dissenting chapels?—I cannot say. I know that there is one very large chapel in my district; Hind Street Chapel, which, I believe, is a Wesleyan chapel, and there are several others; but they are in nooks and corners where we know little or nothing about them.

486. You do not hear much of them among the poor?—No; I am sorry to say that we hear much more about those that have no religion at all than we do of dissenters.

487. Your curates go among all classes of the poor indiscriminately, do they not?—They go whenever they are applied for.

488. Do you not consider that the parish church is too large?—I do not know what other clergymen may say. I have been accustomed all my life to large churches, and I do not find it too large. I believe that I am perfectly well heard; and I believe that, unlike a church as it is, yet for a place of congregational worship it is as convenient a church as was ever built. All the people hear, and all the people join in worship.

The Reverend WILLIAM QUEKETT, examined.

Rev. W. Quekett.

489. WHAT is the name of your parish?—Christchurch district, St. George's in the East.

490. What is the population of the parish?—At the last census it was 17,124.

491. Have you ever considered the expediency of a further subdivision of your parish with a view to parochial organization?—Yes.

492. And what is the view that you take of that question?—At the present moment another district is being formed out of the district of Christchurch with a new church. I have thought it desirable to do so on account of the number being too many for one individual to attend to.

493. Will that district be altogether independent?—Yes; and it will have about 7,000 attached to it.

494. Is your own a chapelry district?—Yes.

495. Appointed by the Church Building Commissioners?—Yes.

496. In the gift of any incumbent?—In the patron of the living, Brasenose College.

497. It is a district parish, is it not?—It is called a chapelry district.

498. And yet in the gift of the patron?—Yes, I understand so.

499. Have you considered the principle of the subdivision of parishes generally?—I have not given a very great deal of attention to it. I believe, in my own mind, it would be exceedingly beneficial for the spiritual welfare of the people if it could be carried out.

500. Your subdivision will still leave 10,000 under your own charge?—Yes.

501. Is not 10,000 a number far too many?—Yes. Why I proposed it was, that there is another chapel, a proprietary chapel in that district, in which there are 10,000; and, in the event of anything taking place, that 10,000 might be again subdivided into 5,000 each, giving a district to that chapel. Then we should have three chapels and three districts for our population.

502. In the proprietary chapel are there any free sittings?—I do not know how many. There was an idea once of its being purchased; the parties were willing to part with it; and in the event of dividing it in that way it might be eventually subdivided again.

503. You have the sole charge of 17,000?—Yes. I had charge of the whole parish of 41,000, as curate, for twelve years.

504. What difficulties have you found in the way of discharging your duties conscientiously?—The whole of my time was occupied in attending to the duties of the church. Every day I was at the church, and there were weddings generally every day, and funerals every afternoon, the whole year round. I appointed three days in the week to give attendance at the church for matters connected with the duties of the parish. No sailor goes to sea in our neighbourhood but what used to leave his wife a monthly note; and she cannot get her money without having the paper signed by the minister. A great number of people in the eastern portion of London are connected with shipping, and it is almost one person's duty to attend to that matter alone. It is a duty prescribed by Act of Parliament. I was a curate for twelve years. The rector was resident, but of late years did no duty.

505. It was next to impossible for you to have become acquainted with your people?—Yes; I never saw the parties again after I had married them.

 506. Domiciliary

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506. Domiciliary visitations, I presume, you could never attend to?—In all cases of great distress, or where immediate attendance was required, I attended to those cases. As for going to look out for persons, that was impossible, because time would not allow it.

507. What has been done in your present district with regard to visiting from house to house?—I have a district visiting society, divided into fourteen sections, and there are two scripture readers in the district.

508. Do you find that by means of this assistance. and your own domiciliary visitations, that you acquire a knowledge of the parties in the district?—Yes.

509. So that you can tell what their circumstances are?—Yes. I keep a diary of every particular case. I sit at the vestry twice or three times a week, and everything is written down by me. If a person comes to me, I write down the history of the case, which is indexed up; and if a person has ever had any communication with me, if I wished to know anything respecting his circumstances, &c., I can always turn to the record of them immediately.

510. What amount of church accommodation is there?—The church will accommodate 1,600 people, and 700 free sittings.

511. What number of sick have you under visitation in your present district containing 17,000?—I cannot tell. Sometimes it is more, and sometimes less. I may mention this circumstance: In the week before last the registrar of the district never registered a single death out of 17,000 people, and that was an evidence there was very little sickness. It was a most remarkable thing.

512. Can you state the amount of the sacramental alms in your district?—About 20*l.* a year.

513. What is the total number of communicants?—The average number is about 100 every month.

514. Is the sacrament administered more than once a month?—Only once a month, besides the appointed days.

515. In what proportions are the rich and the poor in your district?—I should say three to one of the poor, as compared with the respectable people, who come to receive the sacrament.

516. What would be the highest rental in your district,—the average rental?—I have taken the average rental throughout the whole district, comprising seventy-seven streets and courts; and of the total of 2,618 houses, 1,800 are poor houses. The whole average rental of the district is 22,378*l.* a year, which gives an average of 8*l.* 10*s.* per house throughout the whole district.

517. How many persons are there in your district?—17,124 at the last census.

518. Would it not be a great spiritual benefit if that district could be divided into districts equally independent as yours?—Truly.

519. It would be a decided advantage?—Yes.

520. In every point of view?—Yes. But I do not exactly understand what is meant by the proposal as to 4,000 inhabitants. I should say about 3,000 or 4,000 families. When 4,000 inhabitants are spoken of, we must suppose it to be a man, his wife, and two or three children; that will give only about 1,000 adults. I think 4,000 would be too small a number.

521. Your parish consists of 17,000 people?—Yes; men, women, and children.

522. Assuming that there were the means of doing it, into what portions would you divide the district?—I should divide it equally, according to the area.

523. Into how many districts would you divide it?—I should suppose that it might be divided into three districts. Divide 17,000 into three.

524. Making one district of 7,000 and two districts of 5,000 each?—Yes. According to the map one part of it is not so thickly peopled. This is the district of Christchurch (*describing the same on a map*).

525. Any division of that district would have some regard to the situation of the comparatively rich and poor?—Yes.

526. Are there any wealthy persons resident in your district?—None.

527. How many are there who are in moderately easy circumstances?—There are 344 shops in the district, and 164 respectable houses; the persons occupying those are the persons who pay the principal rates.

528. Are they Church people generally?—Yes, they are; those are the individuals who support the church. Out of 17,000 I have 15,000 poor.

529. How many schools are supported in your district?—I have eight schools, containing 1,000 children now.

530. How are they supported?—I have a school, where I have an upper class; they pay 6*d.* and 4*d.*; and out of that higher class I help to support the lower classes. I have 6*d.*, and 4*d.*, and 2*d.*, and free.

531. The

531. The funds are all thrown together?—Yes; I work from one fund.

532. Under a subdivision of the parish, how would you propose to manage the school system?—Then the plan would be different; it must be from external aid. If you gave the best school to that part (*pointing to the map*), and left this very poor part to the poor school, it must be from other aid than I have at present.

533. Unless the parish, subdivided for other purposes, were kept together for the purpose of forming school unions?—Yes.

534. Have you any sources of income besides the pew rents?—No other income but the pew rents and fees.

535. You have no endowment whatever?—No.

536. Do you receive every kind of fee?—No; no burial fees; there is no burial ground attached to it.

537. What amount of money towards the support of the schools do you raise within the district?—There is the children's pence.

538. Will you state what amount you obtain towards the support of the schools, and for every other parochial purpose, from within the district?—The principal amount is the sacramental money. I have about twenty contributors; 20*l.* were raised within the district.

539. What do the pew rents produce?—As settled by Act of Parliament, they would, if all the seats were let, produce 600*l.* a year; but not one half of them are let; 387 seats are unlet.

540. How are they occupied; as free seats?—Yes; I allow them to be occupied by the people frequenting the church.

541. Are all the pew rents fixed at the same rate?—No; they are from 5*s.*, 3*s.* 9*d.*, to 2*s.* 6*d.*

542. What would the 387 seats produce if let?—The majority of them are seats that would produce 3*s.* 9*d.* per quarter.

543. What do those which are let produce?—In round numbers about 300*l.* a year, out of which I have to pay the curate and the clerk, and other expenses.

544. What amount is raised for the schools in the district?—I have subscriptions which produce about 20*l.* a year, and once a year we have a charity sermon, and the children's pence pay up the remainder, besides the external aid which I get.

545. As to the district visiting society, what amount is produced from within?—Nothing.

546. Your aid is entirely from without?—Yes.

547. Chiefly from grants by the Metropolitan Visiting Relief Association?—Yes.

548. You would be disposed to divide your parish into three parts?—It is only divided into two now, but I would divide it into three.

549. One of those parts is Christchurch, which you have been alluding to?—Yes.

550. Is there not a parish in the neighbourhood of Pell Street in your district?—No; Pell Street is not in my district.

551. What amount towards the support of the schools and other parochial charities is derived from without?—I call it 100*l.*; which money is subscribed every year; and then there are 100 children annually clothed, and that costs 40*l.*; this I beg out of the district from all parts; then the London Dock Company give me a subscription towards the school annually; and I should say I might have 50*l.* or 60*l.* to make up the deficiency within. The poor people do a great deal for themselves. I have a penny bank for the district, and I have more than 2,000 contributors to it. Last year I received 763*l.* in poor people's money; they put it by for rents and clothing, and such like. They began with a penny, and now it has so overgrown itself that I refused last Monday more than twenty or thirty contributors; and more than eighteen persons are employed every Monday to take this money.

552. Do you add anything to it?—Nothing more than what the money produces by interest from being paid into a savings bank.

553. Have you found any difficulty from not being in an entirely independent parochial position?—I am quite independent of the rector of the parish.

554. In what respects are you differently situated than you would be in a bonâ fide ancient parish?—Because I do not pay parochial rates for the district alone; they are extended over the whole parish. The rector has no power over me; the patrons are Brasenose College.

555. In everything except rates you are wholly independent?—Yes.

556. Should you have the power of burying if you had a burial ground?—No. The Mercers' Company, to whom the estate belongs, always introduce a clause into the lease specifying that there shall be none attached.

557. Have you no power of supporting the church by rates?—No; we never attempted a church rate.

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558. Supposing you were constituted a wholly independent parish as to rates, and supposing you had power given you to raise rates, if you yourself were exempt from contributing to the rates of the mother church, do you think you would be able to raise rates for your own church?—No. When the plan was intended to be made originally I was applied to, and I gave it as my opinion that it would be very ill advised to make this district (*pointing to the map*), containing a vast number of the poor, to be saddled with their own rates, having 15,000 poor out of 17,000; and the remaining 2,000 are a very small portion of the respectable and wealthy part of the whole parish.

559. Are rates raised for the mother church?—Yes; church rates.

560. Are they raised without much difficulty?—Of late years there has been much difficulty; in former years it was not so.

561. Still they are raised?—Yes.

562. Your church has not had occasion for rates?—No; it has only been consecrated eight or nine years. We have raised subscriptions for the repairs of it; such as painting, &c.

563. You receive nothing from a general rate?—Not a farthing.

564. Would any advantage be derived by you in your position from having a church rate levied upon your own parochial district for the support of your own church?—I think not. The parties who would have to pay it are those who pay everything already.

565. Supposing your income were derived from other and independent sources, and that you were not dependent upon pew-rents for the maintenance of the fabric and for yourself, do you not think that you might within your own district raise a church rate?—I have no doubt that those individuals, if they sat in that church without paying their pew-rents, and the church were endowed, that they would willingly pay to the support of the fabric at any time, besides the annual expenses for the services of the church.

566. And that they would also contribute to the support of the schools and other chapels?—Yes. The annual expenses that I have to meet are nearly 100*l.* a year.

567. The inhabitants of your district at present pay their proportion of rates to the mother church, do they not?—Yes.

568. What proportion of the seats in your church are free?—700 are free.

569. They are all occupied, are they not?—Yes. Last Sunday night at a quarter to six o'clock there were seventy-three people,—I counted them myself,—poor persons, waiting before the doors were opened, to get their own free seats and prayer books. I find it is a very useful plan to keep a number of prayer books, which are put out by the pew openers, and the people always come early to get them, and to go to their free seats.

570. How many persons will the centre aisle contain?—250; the free seats in the middle.

571. Did it ever occur to you that many of the poor people might like to pay a small sum to have a seat appropriated to themselves; such a sum, for instance, as 1*s.* or 2*s.* per year?—Yes; and I have mentioned that to the Bishop of London. Even these poor people, I said, who come here so early, would willingly pay 1*s.* a year, or a small sum by the quarter, if they could get a seat, and knew that they could get it. The reason why these unlet seats are not occupied,—all the best seats are readily taken,—but a seat in a bad position, for a person to pay for it, I find it very difficult to let; and therefore I should have preferred to put a larger amount upon the very good ones, and to have been able to throw the others into the free, rather than allow them to remain at a small sum.

572. You have stated that you thought 4,000 was rather too small a number as a remedy?—I meant that answer to apply to my own district, having divided it in my own mind.

573. Is not 4,000 as many as a minister can manage, with repeated domiciliary visitations, so as to become acquainted with all his people?—A man with four or five or six thousand here can do his duty better than he can with a living in the country with a scattered population of 500. His congregation lie in a ring fence around him. I have only sixty-three acres in the whole of my district.

574. Is not 4,000 as large a number as you can thoroughly become acquainted with?—Yes.

575. How many services are performed every Sunday?—Three.

576. Have you any idea of the numbers of different individuals attending those three services? You have stated that the church holds 1,600?—At the evening service there is quite a different congregation from the morning, especially with the poor people. I see them divide,—the husband and wife; one comes in the morning, and the other in the evening. I know a number of instances of that kind, and where elder children have stayed at home while the mother and father have come out. The afternoon service is not so well attended as I could wish. They are poor people who principally come for baptisms and churchings.

577. What amount of population would be necessary to fill your church three times a day?—I have proposed in the new church that they should have 7,000. I thought that would be about the number that would give two good congregations. It will hold, with children, about 1,000.

578. Your

578. Your church holds 1,600?—Yes. I thought that would procure a good congregation at each time. We have places of dissent there which must be taken out of the amount. *Rev. W. Quekett.* 15th May 1849.

579. Have you any idea of the proportions of nominal churchmen and dissenters, including Romanists, in your district?—No, I have not.

580. You think it would be more advantageous to have two churches with four clergymen than four churches with a clergyman to each?—No. I should think I should prefer four churches with a clergyman to each. I think that four persons would be more likely to get a larger number of persons to attend the four churches than would attend two churches with two clergymen.

581. You do not think there is any advantage in two men working together and assisting each other?—Not so great.

582. As far as possible, you would apply the principle of individual responsibility?—Yes.

583. And make each community a district within itself?—Yes. I think the advantage of that would be very great.

The Reverend RICHARD RAWLINS examined. *Rev. R. Rawlins.*

584. You are the incumbent of Limehouse?—No; I am curate of that parish.

585. What is the population of your parish?—I estimate it at about 25,000.

586. How many churches have you?—One.

587. How many people will it accommodate?—It is considered to accommodate about 2,000.

588. Adults?—No; including school children.

589. How many school children are there?—Nearly 800.

590. Are there any more free sittings besides those for the school children?—Yes; about 200 free sittings.

591. Is not Ratcliff also in the parish of Limehouse?—Part of Ratcliff is. There is a church at Ratcliff; but I did not include the population of that district in the 25,000.

592. You have only one church, and that accommodates about 2,000, including the school children?—Yes.

593. How many children attend the different parish schools?—We have a boys and girls national school, a girls day school, an infant school, and two Sunday schools. We have about 800 children attending altogether; 900, probably; it is difficult to say how many are attending the Sunday schools, they are so very variable.

594. The rector is non-resident, is he not?—Yes.

595. How many clergymen are engaged in the parish?—Two, exclusive of the afternoon lecturer.

596. Has the lecturer any parochial charge whatever?—None whatever. He merely delivers the afternoon sermon.

597. For those 25,000 people there are two clergymen only in charge?—Yes.

598. Do not you think that a division of the parish of Limehouse into distinct and separate parishes would afford great facilities for the education and the spiritual instruction of the people?—I do.

599. Into how many divisions would you propose it to be divided?—I suggested, in a communication that I made to the committee of the Metropolis Churches Fund, that it was most important that there should be two churches built in two different parts of the parish.

600. You recommended that there should be three churches, and then there would be about 8,000 souls to each church?—Yes.

601. Do not you think 8,000 rather a large number?—I was speaking under the mark, and with reference to the immediate necessities of the case. There is a very poor part of the parish with a population of from 12,000 to 14,000, and it is in a very small area.

602. What is the area of your district altogether?—My schoolmaster sent me a little memorandum upon that point this morning; he says that it is 224 acres.

603. A good deal consists of fields?—There are some fields in the north-eastern part of the parish. I have the map of the parish in my pocket (*producing the same*). This is a map of nearly 150 years ago; and the part I now allude to as containing a population of 14,000 or 15,000 is in that small area, about a quarter of a mile square. The church is here (*pointing it out*).

604. You think that three divisions of this district are required?—Yes. A considerable portion of the property here is unbuilt upon (*pointing out the same*). I believe Mr. Cotton has some plan in contemplation in reference to that.

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605. Would you propose that these should be free churches, or that there should be any pews let, or not?—With respect to the part I now allude to, there are very few persons living there who have the means of contributing in any way. They are plunged in the depths of poverty, and want every penny that they can possibly scrape together for the necessaries of life.

606. How do you support your schools?—That is the great difficulty; it is almost impossible to do it. Fortunately our national schools have some endowment. As to the schools that I have recently established myself, there is great difficulty in keeping them in existence, for the want of funds; and in consequence of the great want of funds it is difficult to find persons to act as a committee, on account of the responsibility they would thus incur. Though there has generally been a committee, the pecuniary responsibility has fallen upon myself. Finding the pressure in this respect to be very heavy upon me, I stated to the committee, about nine months ago, that I thought they ought to release me from that individual responsibility, and that I ought, as one of the committee, only to share it; I was willing to share it; and the following week they all resigned.

607. On what grounds?—On the ground of the responsibility.

608. You think that two additional churches would be as many as there would be reasonable hope of procuring congregations for?—I think that we might have congregations for them. The poor people in this part (*pointing to the map*) are too poor to come to our church. They would not do so. It is a very fine church, and the poor do not like to go there on the Sabbath day unless they can appear in decent apparel.

609. Is there bad accommodation in that church for the poor?—It is very limited, There are about 200 free seats.

610. Are they well placed?—Yes, in the best part of the church, and they are generally full.

611. Have you a district visiting society?—Yes.

612. What number of visitors have you?—Sixteen.

613. Does that embrace the whole of your 25,000?—It is not at all adequate for it.

614. You have the whole 25,000 divided into separate districts, each having a visitor, have you not?—Yes.

615. Have you any idea of the average number of sick in those districts?—We generally have about sixteen sick persons requiring the attention of a clergyman. There must of course be many more than that who are sick in the whole of the parish, but these come under the notice of the clergy of the parish. All the poor who come under our notice are entered in a register, and their names are carried out from that into an alphabetical register, for the convenience of reference. When once they are brought under our notice, until they leave the parish we do not lose sight of them.

616. In a parish so large as yours I presume that you only know the poor who send for you, and that you find it quite impossible to visit them voluntarily?—Not so; we find them through the district visitors and the scripture readers.

617. Where does the incumbent reside?—At Doddington near Sittingbourne.

618. You and one other clergyman have the whole charge?—Yes.

619. Is he exempt from residence by holding another benefice?—Yes.

620. Are the sacramental alms at your disposal?—Partly; myself and the churchwardens.

621. The churchwardens take their share?—Yes.

622. What is the total amount of the sacramental alms?—About 25*l.* a year.

623. What is the total number of communicants?—The total number of communicants is about 250.

624. At any one time?—No.

625. What is the largest number at any one time?—About 150.

626. Is the sacrament of the Lord's Supper administered twice in a month, or more?—Once a month, and on the great festivals.

627. Have you any idea as to the comparative number of Romanists and dissenters in the parish who could not be included in any of the parochial arrangements, as not being likely to come to church?—I have no idea as to the number. We have a large number of poor Irish living in the parish, and many of those are Romanists.

628. Is there a place of worship belonging to them?—Not in the parish.

629. How many dissenting places of worship are there?—Three.

630. How many do they accommodate?—The principal one is the Wesleyan meeting-house, which, I suppose, would accommodate a thousand persons; I should think not more. The others are very small.

631. In point of fact there is not so much accommodation for dissenters as for members of the church?—No. One of those meeting-houses that I allude to is comparatively a small room.

632. Has

632. Has Mr. Cotton at all interested himself towards getting a new church?—He is the owner of a considerable portion of land in the north-eastern part of the parish; and I have reason to believe that he has some plan in contemplation with reference to his property in that part of the parish, the object of which will be to erect a church and endow it.

633. Is it the fact that the great bulk of your poor people go to no place of worship at all?—Yes.

634. How many services have you in the church?—Three on the Sabbath-day.

635. Do the same persons come to church at each service, or are they different congregations?—I am sorry to say that they are in a great measure three different congregations.

636. What number of children do you suppose there are in Limehouse not receiving any instruction at all?—There must be a very large number of children not receiving instruction.

637. Are there more not receiving instruction than otherwise?—Considerably more.

638. Wholly untaught?—Yes.

639. Is that mainly owing to want of means?—Yes. I have been most anxious to obtain ground in this part (*pointing to the map*) for a church school. There is a little land at present unoccupied.

640. You would give to any new church erected in that parish all the privileges of a separate parish church?—I should be desirous of giving everything that could be given for the welfare of the locality in which it might be erected.

641. Do you believe that a church possessed of all the privileges of a parish church would be more effective in its operation upon the people than one that was only partially possessed of those advantages?—I do not know whether I should think so; I think not.

642. How do you explain that?—A variety of things would influence me in that opinion. In the first place, there is the question of endowment. Looking at that question——

643. But supposing a sufficient endowment furnished; a church and an endowment?—Supposing every thing found, and a sufficient endowment, it is obvious that the position might be occupied by an inexperienced young man. I think that it would not be for the benefit of the people that he should be placed in an entirely independent position. I consider it desirable that he should be under the control of the rector of the parish church, who must be supposed to be a person of more experience and discretion.

644. Suppose such an endowment, and a person of some experience and age placed in that position; what would then be your opinion?—I should doubt then in all cases the desirableness of that total separation and exemption from the control of the rector in any large parish. I think there would be a want of unity of operation. I think that the same effect is not produced by a number of clergymen in a large parish working in different districts independently, and isolated from each other, as would be produced by the same number of clergymen working in those districts, and looking up to some one as their leader or head.

645. Would not the people be more likely to feel a kind of attachment to an individual minister?—Of course they would.

646. Do the Commissioners understand you to say that you think the most desirable way of providing for the spiritual destitution of Limehouse would be this, that there should be two or three other churches, or as many as could be built, and that they should be in the hands of curates who would be under the control and superintendence of the rector?—Not exactly so; though perhaps it is presumption in me to volunteer an opinion. I conceive that the rectors of some of our large parishes might be made suffragan bishops, and, as such, have an important influence in the districts over which they presided.

647. But suffragan bishops would have incumbents under them, and not curates?—Yes.

648. Would you wish them to be dependent?—No, certainly not.

649. Would you wish the rector to have a general control and superintendence over them all?—I think he should have some control.

650. What kind of control? An episcopal control?—That is what I am aiming at.

651. The same sort of control that a bishop exercises over his clergy?—Yes.

652. So as to secure unity of action?—Yes.

653. You would wish the ministers of those churches to perform all the offices of the Church for the people, would you not?—Certainly.

654. And the parish minister so performing those offices to receive all the fees?—Decidedly; to be quite independent in that respect. I think that what is required in large parishes cannot be accomplished but by unity of operation among the clergy, and that it can only be produced by having some one who would be a kind of leader, and who by his judgment, experience, and discretion would guide and regulate all their proceedings.

655. Within a certain territorial limit?—Yes.

656. Do you think, that supposing a very large parish were divided into distinct and independent parishes, that the incumbent of the mother church would retain a moral

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control, and that there would be a moral coherence in the parish so subdivided?—It would be desirable.

657. Do you think that it would be so, were a parish so subdivided into distinct and independent parishes; that the incumbent of the mother church of the parish so subdivided would retain a moral superintendence, and so preserve a moral coherence in the parish?—I think that unless he did do that the good wished for would not be produced.

658. You like a large parish instead of a number of small ones?—I think that a number of small ones would not effect the good that might be effected.

659. Everything would depend upon the rector in a large parish, would it not?—Yes.

660. In towns is it not more difficult to create a parochial tie than in country districts?—I should say that it is.

661. Is it for that purpose more essential to create a personal tie between the parish minister and his people, physical circumstances not creating the tie of themselves?—What I have said, I think, would not interfere to prevent that personal tie between the minister and the people. It would only have the effect of making a clergyman more energetic; and the clergy of the different districts all acting in union would produce a greater amount of good.

662. What sort of control do you suppose would be exercised?—If it was a rector he could only exercise a moral influence, unless by special enactment some additional authority and power was given to him as rector.

663. You would wish that the clergy should remain in their places?—Yes.

664. Is that not more likely to be the case where parties are incumbents of churches than where they are merely stipendiary curates? Have they not the feeling of independent action, which ties them rather more to the spot?—Yes, of course they have.

665. That is rather a reason for giving them as much independence as possible?—Yes; so far as regards making them permanent appointments.

666. You would have the parochial system of schools clustering round these new churches?—I do not know, when there is a large population, whether that might be desirable. I think that schools might be advantageously found to take two or three districts together.

667. Do not you find in the large parishes that a much smaller proportion of children are sent to the school than in the smaller parishes?—Yes.

668. The people are more easily satisfied with what appears to be a larger number of children for the parish than in fact it is, in a district which is equal to ten or twelve parishes?—Yes. That arises from the more personal inspection and superintendence of the clergyman; he knows all the people in a small parish, which he does not in the other.

669. And the people of the district feel a greater interest in that which is more immediately amongst themselves than in that which is connected with a wider district?—That is very probable.

670. What number do you think should be assigned to a church of the capacity of yours in order to fill that church twice a day?—I think that the usual thing is to take about one third of the population.

671. Would a district containing 6,000 persons supply your church?—It ought to do so, if the people were all right-minded.

672. Including dissenters and all?—Yes.

673. That population would require the attention of two clergymen, would it not?—More than two, certainly. Two clergymen could not take the personal superintendence of 6,000 people; it is physically impossible. Unless a clergyman can know the face and person of each individual, I think he can do very little good with them.

674. What number personally could a single clergyman superintend?—I should think not beyond 2,000.

675. You would desire to have for every 6,000 people a church and three clergymen?—Yes, where the population is dense as it is in London.

676. How is your parish managed in all the parochial affairs? What sort of vestry or committee have you?—We have almost an open vestry. The vestry consists of persons contributing a certain amount to the poor rate under a local Act of Parliament, which makes it an almost open vestry.

677. Do you obtain a church rate?—We always have one every second or third year; that is as often as circumstances have required.

678. Suppose the opportunity were offered to you of having four churches with smaller districts, and a clergyman to each, or two larger churches with larger districts, and two or three clergymen to each; which would you consider to be the most likely to work upon the population effectually?—I think that I could work that parish myself more advantageously, and produce a greater effect on the population of the parish, having a certain number of clergymen in co-operation with me, and chapels or churches in different parts of

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of the parish; that I could thus, having it all under my own control, work more effectually on the population than could be done by means of separate independent districts.

679. Or than it would be worked separately by separate men?—Yes.

680. You rely more upon the principle of co-operation under a leader than upon individual responsibility and freedom of action?—Yes; that is the result of my experience, looking at the effects produced in different localities.

681. How would it meet your views, supposing the prestige of the rector of a large and populous parish were still retained in a different form; supposing each populous parish divided into separate and independent districts, and each clergyman having an entirely independent cure of souls, the rector of the parish being recognized as the head of those clergymen, but each parish so divided being constituted a deanery, and the rector of the mother church being a dean?—It is some such system as that I have been recommending.

682. Did you not propose that he should be a suffragan bishop?—I used that expression for the purpose of the term.

683. It is only a moral influence that you desire?—That might effect the object. I will take the parish of Bethnal Green to illustrate what I say. In that parish, if the rector were there residing, I think that much more good might be accomplished with a rector suited to the place who would be looked up to by the clergy of all those district churches as the head and leader. They would not work without consulting him.

684. Would you have those clergymen dependent or independent?—Independent as to their position and income.

685. If, on the one hand, there is an advantage in the activity of many being directed and guided by one, is there not an equally possible chance of the energy of many being paralyzed by the want of energy of the one who would be placed in a certain position above them?—If he was an inefficient man.

686. You have to set on the one side the possible advantage of the guidance of one, and on the other the possible disadvantage of a check being given to the whole system?—Certainly.

687. On the supposition that these churches were constituted independent districts wholly independent, so as to raise separate rates, do the Commissioners understand you to say that those districts would be wholly unable to raise rates for the support of the church?—In some of the districts of Limehouse they could not. Very frequently the poor people cannot raise money enough to procure food for themselves, and they could not of course raise rates for the support of churches.

688. If those districts were separately rated for the poor there would be great difficulty in maintaining the poor out of the rates they raised in any district?—Certainly there would. The landlords are made to pay in those very poor districts. I should have said that there was a fourth dissenting chapel.

Adjourned to Tuesday next.

Tuesday, 22d May 1849.

The ARCHBISHOP OF YORK in the Chair.

Hon. and Rev. Henry M. Villiers.

22d May 1849.

The Honourable and Reverend HENRY MONTAGUE VILLIERS examined.

689. YOU are incumbent of Saint George's Bloomsbury?—Yes.

690. What is the population of your parish?—About 17,000.

691. Is it increasing or stationary?—Stationary.

692. How many churches are there in the parish?—There are three in connexion with the Established Church, and a French Protestant Episcopal church.

693. Are the services held in French?—Yes; but those who attend that church are English people for the most part; they are descendants of French refugees.

694. There are only two consecrated?—Only two, Bedford Chapel is not consecrated. I gave in a report which contained the amount of people that those churches would hold; I do not exactly recollect what the numbers were. I sent an exact account of numbers according to the rental in the different churches; but we have considerably more persons in Saint George's church every Sunday than the number I returned.

695. You have certain churches beside the parish church. Have you districts assigned to those churches?—There is no district assigned to any church.

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696. Have you not a strong opinion upon that subject, and that it would not be desirable that any district should be assigned to the church in Woburn Square?—Yes; I think it is very undesirable.

697. Will you state your reasons why you think it undesirable that a district should not be assigned to Christ Church Bloomsbury?—I am sorry that I have left a letter behind me which I would have rather placed in the hands of the Commissioners instead of giving any opinion of my own upon the subject of a district being assigned to Christ Church in my parish, as I am an interested party, therefore I feel that any opinion I may give must be comparatively of very little weight. It was proposed that the parish should be subdivided some years ago, I think six or seven years ago. It was settled by the Church Building Commissioners that that division should take place; upon that being decided a gentleman in the parish, after consulting with one or two others upon the propriety of doing so, drew up a formal statement of the condition of the parish, and sent this letter to the Bishop of London. The Bishop, upon reading that letter, said he conceived that it was a very complete exception to the case, and gave up the plan of dividing the parish. That letter I have authority from the gentleman who wrote it to place in the Commissioners hands if they wished to see it.

698. Do you recollect the grounds stated in that letter?—Yes, I recollect many of them, though I think it would have been better to have read them in the writer's own words. The grounds were partly these:—that the income of that parish is almost entirely upon the voluntary system, that the endowment is under 50*l.* a year, that the rest is entirely dependent upon the fees and Easter offerings, that in consequence of the deterioration of the burial fees through cemeteries the income had very materially fallen off. Upon that these gentlemen, Sir Robert Inglis, Mr. Justice Coleridge, Mr. Clowes, and others, with very great kindness, went round the parish, and addressed the parishioners, and by their influence and personal visiting it was agreed, in order to secure the full number of clergy being maintained in the parish, (which, without having private means, I was utterly unable to secure,) that the Easter offerings should be doubled, by which means they so raised the income that I was able to continue there myself and maintain two curates. If the parish had been divided, by far the richer portion of it would have been taken away from the mother church, and the poorer part would have been left with the mother church; not the *poorest* portion of it, but the *poorer* portion. The consequence of that would have been a perfect inability to provide for the different charities now supported in the parish. Thus it was considered that the poor themselves would have materially suffered. I think those were the general reasons assigned by the gentleman in his letter to the Bishop of London.

699. If the Commissioners understand you rightly, your objection to the division of the parish of Bloomsbury is a peculiar and local one; it is grounded upon the falling off of income almost entirely?—That was my reason for inserting the remark to which reference has been made when I sent my return to the Board.

700 Supposing that the loss of income could be in any way made up to the rector of Bloomsbury, would you or would you not think it then desirable that a division should be made?—I think it would not be desirable.

701. Will you state your reason why you think so?—I think that there are many reasons which upon such a question as this should be considered; reasons which would bear upon the parish of Bloomsbury would not necessarily bear upon every other parish, therefore that which I would state concerning the parish of Bloomsbury I would not desire to be taken as an opinion concerning the division of parishes generally. I believe that there are some parishes which it is very desirable to divide, but I think that is rather from their territorial extent than from the number of souls. In my own parish, which is the one to which the Commissioners have referred, it is possible for me or any of the clergy to be in any part of it in ten minutes. There is no part of my own parish which I cannot reach within ten minutes to visit any person who may require my attendance. Of course, that is in a very different position, though containing 17,000 people, from the condition of a large country parish, or even such a parish as St. Pancras or Marylebone, where it would be utterly impossible to do so.

702. How many clergy are there in your parish?—I have now, and ever since I became a canon of St. Paul's, three curates and myself, that is four, for the parish church; at Woburn Square Church there is the minister and his curate, making six, and at the Proprietary Chapel there is the minister, and I believe he means to maintain another assistant minister.

703. The clergyman of the Proprietary Chapel takes no part whatever in the pastoral charge?—He has not done so yet, because he has only lately come there; he is an actively-minded man, and seems determined to do his duty, and as far as he has strength he is very willing to co-operate with me.

704. That would of course be quite voluntary, and would depend upon the kind of person who happened to have that chapel?—Yes.

705. It is a mere friendly act?—Yes.

706. What number of free sittings have you in your church or in the other churches?—I cannot give you the figures from memory; they are given in my return to the Board.

707. In

707. In Bedford Chapel they are all free to those who can pay for them?—That is not what is intended by the expression "free seats."

708. Are they not all occupied by people who pay for them?—I do not know how that is in Bedford Chapel.

709. Of course the question is asked without reference to individuals. Will you state whether you think it essential and beneficial that the minister of Woburn Square church, which church contains about thirteen hundred or fourteen hundred people, should remain, as he is now in point of law subject to your control, or that he should be an independent minister?—Putting out of question anything connected with individuals, I should say "yes;" that is supposing we were acting with one mind and one accord, and that we were living together as brethren. I think it would be more desirable and more useful.

710. Do you think, therefore, it would be expedient to unite St. Dunstan's with St. Bride's?—I do not think that the cases are parallel. I would not unite existing parishes to make large ones. The question on which I understood I was to be examined was, whether I would break up a large parish, that out of one might be made many.

711. Will you state whether in your opinion it would be better to place ten thousand people under two incumbents or under one?—The broad question must be answered in one way, and a particular instance might be answered in another. I think if I were to answer the broad question, whether it is better to have ten thousand people under one or two incumbents, my common sense would say under two rather than under one, but when I came to inquire upon the particular bearings of that case I might give a different answer.

712. You would make an exception to the rule?—I think that every case must be judged upon its own merits.

713. Assuming the case of a populous place, and looking to the efficient supervision of a number of people, are you of opinion that it would be better that it should be managed by one incumbent having others under him, or by several clergymen acting independently?—Where they can be brought closely under the control of one individual I think it is better that there should be one rather than two separate heads. I think so, for many reasons: In the first place, I believe that it will lead to more work being done; secondly, that it will tend to greater influence among the clergy themselves; and thirdly, with all due deference to the Commissioners, I believe it would be even better in the case of the bishops. If the Commissioners will allow me, I will give my reasons more in detail: I think in the first place, the individual clergy would be more influential in this matter; there are many parties to be legislated for, quite as much as in any other case. The rich are to be considered quite as much as the poor, and the poor quite as much as the rich, but the one are not to be legislated for at the expense of the other. I think, under a system of the complete division of parishes into small incumbencies, the effect will be, that the clergy will lose their influence with the rich, and they will not increase their influence with the poor. They will lose their influence with the rich in this manner; this country does (whether rightly or wrongly is a separate question) pay considerable deference to what I may term the aristocracy of wealth. If the clergy are of a much poorer order than their parishioners you will find that they will lose their influence with the middle and upper classes. You see this illustrated very strongly in the case of the Church of Scotland. Of course there will be individual exceptions; but they are the exceptions, and not the rule. Where a man has either rank or birth, or where he has superior talents, these accidents will prevent the evil to which I am alluding. But those cases in which rank and talent are combined are the exceptions compared with the generality of the large body of men who enter upon the work of the ministry. Mere piety will not give them weight with the upper classes, so far, at least, as my own observation has gone of the dealings of the upper classes with the clergy. I do not mean that there are not certain times when the clergyman will not be invited to the house of richer people in his parish; but I believe that it is because it is considered a matter of bounden duty, and they must, as they say, "be civil;" but as for paying attention to them, or looking upon them as those set over them in the Lord, or as persons who are, from their very office, entitled to command respect, I do not believe they will do so, if the clergy, as a body, are made of a much poorer order. Then I think also, with reference to the poorer clergy, they will suffer, as regards their influence, in proportion. The poorer clergy at the present time take up their position in society in this way; they are admitted, not as individual men, but as one of a body; they take rank accordingly and have their weight and influence as clergymen. I am supposing always the moral character to be equal, for if that be wrong I rejoice to think that society will not sanction immorality in any clergyman, high or low, rich or poor. I conceive this to be very important in these days, when so much exertion is being made to supply the great lack of clergy from all ranks and conditions of men who are willing to devote themselves to the service of God. Then as regards the bishops' power, if you make a greater number of incumbents you must increase the number of bishops, or they cannot do their work amongst their clergy as it ought to be done. I believe that any such measure as increasing the episcopate to a very great degree would meet with great unpopularity in the country. I gather this from the tone of the debates in Parliament in the last few years. I look upon the present system of the Church of England as being that which if carried out is much the most likely to do good; I value its different gradations of ranks from the bishop to the worst-paid curate.

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I trust I shall not be considered impertinent if I venture to say that any bishop may err; he may bring forward some very crude plan, and give his fiat accordingly. Who is it that will venture to address that bishop under those circumstances, and reason with him quietly? It is not the man who is in the position of a poor and humble curate that will venture to do it. I do not know why it is, but I am perfectly convinced of the fact, that there is a very strong, and I may almost call it a superstitious, feeling in the great body of us who are the lower clergy; when we stand in the presence of our bishop our mouths appear to be sealed. This is constantly the case; we seem to forget that the mere fact of an individual being elevated to the bench does not deprive him of all kindness of heart, diminish his brotherly affection, or alter his sympathies. We too often forget these facts, and then our lips are sealed. I have seen it again and again. In spite of my own bishop's unvarying kindness to me, I have felt it myself. I have heard the clergy more than once, speaking of an interview with their diocesan, say, "I felt so and so, but I did not like to say so to the bishop." The bishop is now raised from his worldly circumstances much above his clergy. This is in a measure absolutely necessary. He must have wealth to maintain his rank. But if you take away the influence of certain clergy, you by so much the more increase the distance between them and the bishops. This would be inadvisable for the bishops themselves, and not less so for the clergy. You place much more power in the hands of one, and you take away power distributed amongst the many.

714. Your objections seem very much to arise from a supposition that any subdivision of parishes must necessarily lead to the abolition of those eminences among the clergy, by position and by income, which you think are very desirable elements of rank in the Church?—Yes.

715. But quitting that point of view, if you had an aggregation of 30,000 people, do you think that they would be practically better looked after by one person at the head, putting aside the question of income, with clergy under him, operating either directly as curates in one church, or with certain rights in other subordinate churches, or by breaking up that mass of people into a number of divisions which would assign to each a population which would attend at one church, be accommodated by one church, and be ministered to by one or two clergymen?—I look upon the congregational feeling and the parochial feeling as being distinct questions. Of course, where there is congregational feeling, I mean the feeling of affection and union which exists among a certain number of persons who are gaining good under the ministry of a particular clergyman, that feeling will be much stronger than any parochial feeling can be, when you cannot bring all parties under the same constant ministerial influence.

716. Is it not desirable to bring the congregational and parochial feeling into harmony, and that the feeling excited towards the minister should be identical with that which naturally belongs to the minister of the parish?—I think it most desirable if it can be done, but not *so* desirable as that it ought to be purchased at any price. I think if you can do it without other serious injuries happening it would be very desirable; but looking upon it as a whole, I believe, where the territorial district will permit it, a division of labour is far better than a division of parishes; and more will be done in a large parish by one directing head, where he is not afraid to call into the work all the real appliances of the Church of England, that is to say, where he is not so conceited of his own office as to be unwilling to co-operate with the laity. If he were to have his large body of district visitors, his scripture readers and his curates, under him, much more good would be done, and he may become perfectly acquainted in that manner, though not *personally* acquainted, with every one in his own parish. The board will see what I mean, when speaking of this division of labour, by my just illustrating it in this manner: Supposing every clergyman himself to do everything in his own parish, what is the result? He must be a good preacher; he must be reading and preparing for his Sunday ministrations; he has to find time for his school-room lectures (and I believe no parish is decently managed where there are no school-room lectures); he must have time for properly looking after his schools, and I think they should be daily visited by some clergyman, if he is to keep masters and mistresses and children under discipline; he must also visit his sick, and if he is not much among his people who are in health his access to the sick chamber will be sadly limited. I believe this cannot be done by any man unless the parish be very much smaller than is now contemplated. If the parish amount to thousands it cannot be done by one man; but take a larger parish with rector and his two or three fellow labourers; the rector arranges that certain curates shall be on certain days at the school-rooms, and that certain houses shall be visited by another, that the lecture shall be delivered by a third clergyman; here is a division of labour, and there will be more work efficiently done. I have lists of my parishioners, in books which are brought in by the scripture readers, which will give me an account of every child under three years of age, and every child over that age up to fourteen; every one in the parish that is of the Church of England, every dissenter, and every Romanist, every family that possesses the Scriptures, and every individual that is a communicant, together with the worldly occupation of the parents. Thus I can put my hand at once on any family, and know their wants and state.

717. Do you conceive that a large number of people can be better managed in that way, by an authority emanating from a centre, than from a number of smaller and separate centres?—Yes; with more regularity and more usefulness.

718. Will

718. Will the subordinate clergy remain as long in the same place?—No, certainly not.

719. The position of being merely the agent of another clergyman is not one in which an educated and young man willingly stays long?—I suppose we all like to be our own masters.

720. The practical result is, that they pass rather rapidly through that position of subordinate curates, do they not?—Many of them do. Those that are of real ability and piety are rapidly called away. There are so many churches being built, and there is such great and godly anxiety now to choose the fittest men, that I no sooner secure the assistance of a good curate, than some patron comes and takes him away to present him with a living.

721. Will not it interfere with the successful working of your system if there is to be a constant draft of all the good ones, and you have left in your hands men of inferior ability only?—I should not keep them.

722. But will it not very much interfere with the successful working of your system if there is to be such a constant changing of hands?—Yes; and it is one of the most unfortunate parts of the whole plan.

723. The result is, that you have a succession of young curates passing through your parish?—Not quite so. I always have one young curate. I think, as I maintain three curates, that it is a duty I owe to the church at large to give "a title" to one, and so instruct him in the work of a pastor; but I could not leave my parish at all if I was not sure that the other two were men of maturer age and greater experience, men able to take up any case that came before them, and to give the advice or assistance that might be necessary.

724. The natural result of that process would be that you would have one person fixed for two years, and a number of other persons, those who came into immediate contact with the poor, would be successional?—Yes. There is one qualification that I must make, a case such as exists in my own parish. A church where there is not a district, the minister there is immovable. This gentleman, though there is no legal district, is in a measure under me; he is not removable; he has indeed been there ever since the Bishop of Lichfield first placed him there, and therefore under three different rectors.

725. Is it equally convenient with a view to more central government to have a person there who is irremovable, as a person who was more directly your own minister?—I cannot judge of that; it must be a matter of accident. If he is a man like-minded with the incumbent, I would just as soon have him as anybody else. If he is opposed to the rector, and cripples his energies, then it is an inconvenience he must bear with. I suppose, with regard to every system we could devise, we must not expect perfection.

726. Are you of opinion that upon the principle of central government it would be better that all the subordinate clergy should be in a position of removability, so as to be effectually the ministers of the superior clergyman, and co-operate with him?—I think that a distinction must be drawn between the curates immediately under the incumbent, officiating in the same church, and those clergy who are situated as the gentleman to whom reference has been made as minister of Christ Church, and therefore not officiating constantly in Saint James's church as the incumbent of the parish church; supposing that any person succeeded to a large parish, where there were two or three clergymen located, who are very good men, officiating in different churches, and supposing that th individual who was now presented to the mother church is himself useless and inefficient, it is clear that those two or three men who were already working in the parish should be left there rather than be removed, for the new incumbent would appoint men similarly minded with himself, and therefore the removal would be very injurious.

727. Besides that instance, there is a question whether under a central system of government, although it may work very well with an active, energetic, and organizing mind, you are not staking the welfare of a much larger population upon the existence of those rather exceptional qualities?—I am perfectly aware of the danger which you suggest, and it is only by looking upon the question as a whole that will enable me to give an opinion.

728. Do you think upon the whole, with large masses of people, that the chances are in favour of making those large masses dependent upon the activity, energy, zeal, and talent of one man more than giving them the chances of such qualities appearing amongst a greater number?—Two other parties must be alluded to in answer to this question: the patrons of livings and the bishops. If the patrons of livings always considered their own responsibilities, and put in the man that they ought to do, under a sense of responsibility to God for their appointment, that would obviate the difficulty; and secondly, if the ministers could be looked after; if there were any means of bringing the bishop personally acquainted with his clergy, which is my theory of a bishop's duty; in short, if there were not that distance between the bishop and the clergy, if he were a friend to his clergy, not theoretically, but practically their known friend, in the same manner in which a rector ought to be the friend of his curates, it would keep the individual clergyman up to his work; the bishop's moral influence would be brought to bear upon his clergy, and as a body they must then be stirred up to active and energetic parochial work.

 729. That

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729. That would be only feasible with a considerable increase in the number of bishops?—If you divide the parishes there would be an immense amount of intercourse too much for the present staff of bishops. But this might be effected on the present system by the bishops influencing the rectors, and the rectors in turn influencing the minor incumbents.

730. With the existing number of rectors, or whoever the heads of the churches may be, is it possible for the bishop to keep up that amount of intercourse, considering the amount of business thrown upon them almost of necessity?—I really am neither acquainted sufficiently with the number of the clergy under each bishop, nor the amount of a bishop's common and every day employment, to give a just opinion.

731. Upon the whole, do the Commissioners understand it to be your opinion, that taking a parish containing 20,000 persons, yours having only 17,000, you think that that parish would be better managed by having one person at the head, with a sufficient number of stipendiary curates, removable and dependent, to serve the several churches, the incumbent occasionally officiating there whenever he was so minded, than that those churches should be placed under independent ministers, supposing that for the 20,000 people there were four churches with districts assigned to them, and each under the care of its independent minister?—I think the parish would be better managed if the head of the parish be a pious and energetic man, but upon the whole I would rather not have the clergy removable; where they officiate in churches such as Christ Church, Bloomsbury—that is, where the rector is not constantly officiating himself—in such a case as Christ Church, I think it is much better that the clergyman should be there for good and all.

732. As he is irremovable he is in a certain sense exempt from your control, is he not?—Yes, but not exempt from *interference*. Supposing there was a clergyman in that district who is not to be removed from his church, I may not be able to compel him to work, but if the rector of the mother church sees that there is a part of his parish which the minister of the quasi district church voluntarily undertakes to attend to, and which is neglected, or from any reason the minister of the church is unwilling to perform certain duties in the conventional district, such as to give school-room lectures, which he as rector believes to be desirable, he (the rector) is not prevented from going there himself. Without intending to insinuate anything against my colleague at Christ Church, I may say that I am perfectly able to visit in every part of my parish without the slightest exception, and I trust without giving any offence.

733. On what ground do you think it desirable, according to your view of the matter, that he should be removable, because you are well aware, supposing he were your curate, that you might, with the consent of the bishop, give him six months notice to go. In this case you see that he is irremovable, and he must, so far as that goes, be in a certain degree independent of you?—I think that here we must consider the *congregational* question. I consider that a congregation continually changing its minister will never grow in knowledge or much in grace. I think it is much better that the same clergyman should be there continually.

734. Are you of opinion that for a London church a population of 5,000 people would not be too much to be assigned for two clergymen?—Certainly not.

735. Then every 5,000 people must require a church and two clergymen?—Not so. I think that 5,000 souls are not too many, but I am not sure they could not undertake more.

736. In 5,000 people are there not sufficient materials for large church associations and church machinery?—What is meant by "church machinery?"

737. Schools, lectures, and associations of every kind, visiting associations?—I think, with the addition of scripture readers and district visitors, we could do more. We could manage many more than 5,000 with two clergymen; but without the scripture readers and district visitors, the schools and poor would not be well attended to. If the ministry of a clergyman is much blessed to the conversion of souls, he will be much consulted in private, and that over and over again by the same parties, so that he could not keep up that system of visitation from room to room which is so very important, the Scriptures would not be as frequently read to every family as they ought to be.

738. With regard to schools; for every 5,000 people how many children ought to be at school; ought there not to be an eighth?—I have not sufficiently thought of those proportions to give an opinion off-hand. When you speak of 5,000 people do you mean 5,000 poor?

739. No, a mixture; the usual gradations of classes?—Say that you would have a tenth. For instance, if you had 20,000 people you would have 2,000 children at school; out of 5,000 people in such a parish as mine you would not get 500 children. In a country district you very often get a sixth of the whole population for the school. With respect to two streets in my parish I happen to have an account with me. I wanted to know the state of the children last week, and I found that there were forty-two children that ought to have been able to attend the school who were above three years of age—forty-two children in one street; of those I found that thirty-four actually attended our schools, two had been dismissed very lately on account of some gross impropriety, one attended a private school, two were unable to pay for the school at all; one was being taught to read by his father, and two from domestic circumstances were not able to attend. In the second I found that

there

there were fifty-eight children that ought to have been able to go to school; thirty-nine attended my schools out of fifty-eight, three went to dissenting schools, eight were kept at home by ill-health, four went to private schools, two were unable to pay, one went to a ragged school, and one that we considered old enough for an infant school the parents did not consider old enough to part with.

740. What number of families were there?—Of families that had children there were fifty-one.

741. How many children were there altogether?—Just 100; and these happened to be two streets of entirely poor people from which I thought the children ought to come in the greatest numbers.

742. What is the number of children in the whole parish under daily instruction?—I cannot give it you off hand, because there are schools which are distinctly under myself, and schools also which are under the clergyman of the other church, which I never interfere with. Having no infant school at the north end of my parish, there are a very large number of infants who attend an infant school in Mr. Dale's parish.

743. Out of the 17,000 souls in your parish how many are poor?—A small number comparatively; it is a wealthy parish.

744. What number of communicants have you in the parish?—I do not know exactly what the number is at the other churches. The number at my own church averages about 500 a month. I have never had 600.

745. Do they all belong to your parish?—That is more than I could say.

746. How frequently is the sacrament administered?—Once a month.

747. What is the amount of sacramental money in the mother church?—Somewhere about 300*l.* a year.

748. That is the wealthiest congregation?—No; it is the largest congregation, not the wealthiest. The wealthiest congregation is at the other church, and that is just one of the reasons against a division of the parish. You would cut off the wealthy ones and leave the poor ones.

749. Your parish would appear to be one of the most anomalous in all London; you have a parish church, and a new church, the incumbent of which is not removable, and who appears not to have a district?—Not a legal district.

750. He has a conventional district. You have also a chapel of ease just as a man may rent it?—Yes.

751. And you have almost represented that that is the best state of things for 17,000 people?—No. I should be sorry to say that, or even to have it supposed that I thought so; but as long as I saw the parish working as it is now I should be unwilling to make any changes in it.

752. You used the expression, that you thought the pastoral system of the Church of England was the best; surely you will recollect that you are not speaking of the system of the Church of England, but rather of an accident, of an exception to it, because the system of the Church of England is found in the old towns where you find the parishes as thick as they well can stand, and not in a new district which has been built over, and which has grown up to contain 17,000 people?—I was not referring then to the cases of churches or of parishes of this size or of that size, but to the theory of the Church of England of there being different gradations of rank, and of each of those having a distinct influence and being brought to bear the one upon the other. I was referring to the position of the different clergy. I was putting this case: that if there were to be an equality among all those who are called inferior clergy, that then there would be a great gulf fixed between them and the bishop, which would be injurious to all.

753. You stated that it would be necessary to contemplate not only the poor but also the rich, and also the rich as well as the poor?—Yes.

754. Is it not the fact that the poor are not properly supplied with church room?—They are not. I should like more room for them decidedly. I believe my own church holds 1,400 at the morning and evening services.

755. Have you three services in your church?—Yes.

756. Do different people attend the different services?—Few people attend three services, the majority attend two. Then of course there are some, for instance, servants, who will attend morning and afternoon, or morning and evening, according to family arrangements.

757. Practically a much larger number attend the church than 1,400, do there not?—Yes.

758. Out of the 1,400, how many seats do you suppose there are for the poor, excluding schools?—I should not think above 500.

759. In both churches?—No, in my own church; Christchurch might be made to accommodate a great many more.

760. Are there many faculty pews in the church?—There are no such pews at all in the church; everybody is obliged to pay for his seat.

 761. When

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761. When was there a distribution of pews last? On quarter day.

762. How many pews were there distributed?—I think there were three or four vacancies.

763. How many applicants were there?—The names of about 170 families are on our book of applications.

764. How are the proceeds applied?—By Act of Parliament they are applied in aid of the church rates.

765. Are the sums paid by each individual the sums varying according to the position in the church?—Yes.

766. You have stated that the minister of Christchurch is irremovable; you have stated that no district has been legally assigned to him; how is it that he is irremovable; under what authority?—I think under some Act that passed four or five years ago.

767. Although irremovable he has no cure of souls?—Yes, he has; he considers himself responsible.

768. If he has the cure of souls, over what population and what district has he the cure of souls? How is the limit of his cure of souls defined?—He has the cure of souls simply by an agreement made I believe during the incumbency of the Bishop of Lichfield; as he is present he will correct me if I am in error. The parish was mapped out, and it was agreed that he should take all the parts north of certain streets, which he continues to do.

769. That is purely conventional?—Yes.

770. And might be put an end to by you to-morrow?—Yes; I suppose it might be.

771. Do you consider him to be a perpetual curate in the eye of the law?—No, not strictly speaking a perpetual curate in the eye of the law, but in the eye of propriety.

772. But legally he is not a perpetual curate?—No.

773. Then in fact he stands in the relation of a curate to you, and is subordinate to you as the rector of the parish?—No; he certainly is not that any more than the other. He is not in the position of a curate, because I could not compel him as I could one of my own stipendiary curates, to whom I could say, do this, and he does it.

774. He does not stand in the same relation as a curate as your other curates?—No; he is a step above them; he would rank above them in every way.

775. In fact your control over him as rector of the parish is a very qualified control?—A very qualified control. Nothing but a moral influence and kindly feeling on his part, as fellow-labourers, not really any power. I might and do officiate in his church at my discretion.

776. Then the difference which exists between his relation to you and the relation of the other curates to you depends chiefly and solely upon the fact of his being irremovable as minister of Christchurch?—Yes.

777. Are the Commissioners to understand you to say that you considered it desirable that ministers holding churches subordinate to the mother church should be in the condition of this person, irremovable?—Yes, I think it is better on the whole. There may be cases in which it will work ill, but on the whole I think it is better. I think if any congregation found that their clergyman was being removed just at the pleasure of another, it would excite feuds in the parish which it would be impossible to allay afterwards, and though by retaining this individual you might not do all the good you would wish, you would probably do much more good than you would upon the other plan. I think, therefore, they are better irremovable.

778. You are supposing that the minister is irremovable?—Yes.

779. Yet you suppose, although he is irremovable, that you have an absolute control over the service, and that you may officiate there when you please, or regulate the service at your pleasure?—Yes.

780. Do not you think that that kind of control, taking human nature as it is, is liable to be sometimes very annoying to the irremovable minister, and that it may also damp him in his exertions and in his energies; because I conceive that you might say to this minister, "I wish you not to go into the schools, I will take them under my own care." I conceive you have power to do that, have you not?—The fact is, I have never pictured to myself the use of such a power as that. I have been acting not as a legislator but simply as a practical working man: really I have never pictured to myself how I could do mischief to him, but how I might do good in conjunction with him.

781. It is possible that there might be a clergyman not so minded as yourself, and he would have to deal with this irremovable minister; may not his interference be very annoying to that minister; and have a bad moral effect?—Yes; but if we look at the case in that point of view, there is nothing in dealing with our parishes that a bad clergyman may not turn into mischief.

782. You suppose the case of an irremovable yet a dependent minister?—Yes.

783. And which is very anomalous?—Yes; but I still think it is better that he should not be removed.

784. As

784. As a general principle, are you not of opinion that it is better that there should be either an entire subordination of the curate to the rector or vicar, or entire independence on the part of the minister of each church, and that an intermediate state is anomalous?—It is anomalous, there is not a doubt about it; but we should keep in mind the difference arising from officiating constantly in the same church or in different churches. *Hon. and Rev. Henry M. Villiers.* 22d May 1849

785. Supposing there to exist in a parish 20,000 souls, and the same number of churches as there were clergymen, will the great objects of pastoral superintendence be more effectually carried out by a division of parishes or by a division of labour?—By a division of labour.

786. Where, in the course of your reading or among your subordinate clergy, have you ever met with a similar opinion to that which you have given?—I have not been endeavouring to get up any case for this Board. I understood it was the wish of the Commissioners to examine me. I could have no hesitation in complying with that wish, conveyed to me through your Secretary; and I have given you my own opinions.

The Reverend FREDERICK WADE examined. *Rev. F. Wade.*

787. You are the incumbent of the chapelry of Golden Hill in the county of Stafford? Yes.

788. You consider your church to be an independent church, do you not?—The chapelry of Golden Hill is partly independent. It has been formed under the provisions of the Patronage Act of the 1 & 2 W. 4. c. 38.

789. You are desirous that that parish, and others with which you are acquainted, should be more completely divided than they are, are you not?—Yes; I am desirous that it should be divided entirely.

790. In what respects do you consider the present division to be incomplete?—First of all as regards the church rates.

791. You cannot raise your own church rates?—We cannot raise any at all.

792. Do you think it desirable that you should have the power of raising church rates?—Yes, I do.

793. And also that you should be exempt from paying rates to the mother church?—Yes; I consider that would be exceedingly desirable. We pay at present two church rates from the peculiarity of our position. Golden Hill is a chapelry formed out of the district parish of Tunstall, which is a portion of the original parish of Wolstanton. Tunstall is subject for twenty years to the parish of Wolstanton; and an inhabitant of Tunstall has to pay two rates, that is, to Tunstall district parish church and to the mother church of Wolstanton, and this at a time when the newly-formed district has been drained in helping to build its church, school, and parsonage, and when the people, being as yet almost strangers to the benefits the church confers, are perhaps most unwilling to submit to such an unfair impost. Is it just, is it politic, to press so heavily on a long-neglected portion of the population of the parish, and to reserve for the mother church all the tithes, the right of fees, the rates, &c., &c.; and, whilst you free the incumbent from the weight and charge of so many souls, yet to withhold from both the portion of the parish partially severed and its pastor every possible advantage? I think the system unjust to the people and injurious to our church. No proportion of the rates collected in Golden Hill goes to the support of the church there. The people pay double rates; but there is no portion that goes to the maintenance of that church. We have no power to levy any rates whatever for the repair of our church, or to meet the usual expenses of divine worship.

794. Are you of opinion, supposing that you were wholly exempt from liability to any other church but your own, that the people of your district would raise a rate for the support of your church?—I have no doubt of it; and for this reason, that at present our people contribute two rates, one to Wolstanton, and the other to Tunstall; but it is not paid except under very strong protest against the hardship of the case. They have had to pay to two churches, and no portion goes to the maintenance of their own, but still they do pay. There is at present a sufficiently strong feeling towards the Church to enable the wardens of Tunstall and Wolstanton to collect a double rate, but how long that may be maintained I cannot say. My parishioners do most strongly complain, that after the rates they pay they are yet called on a third time, by continual collections, to contribute to the support of their own church at Golden Hill.

795. Do you conceive that the people of Tunstall and Wolstanton would make objections to your being rated separately?—I think not, for I have consulted several individuals, and they state that they regard it as a very great hardship on us, and consider that it would be just and fair that we should be exempt from paying to the original churches, and support and maintain our own church out of the rates collected in its own locality.

796. Your case seems a plain one, because rates are raised in Wolstanton and in Tunstall; but with respect to any of the neighbouring parishes, can you mention to the Commissioners any parish where they do not in point of fact raise rates for the mother church,

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church, and yet where you think they would raise rates for the district church if the inhabitants had the power of being rated for themselves alone?—There is one case that I should wish to bring before the Commissioners, and I think it is a very strong one, as illustrating my view, that where a division takes place it tends to facilitate the collection of rates. I allude to the parish of Stoke-upon-Trent, one of the largest in England. Some years ago that parish was divided. The Act of Parliament under which it was divided was the 47 Geo. III. cap. 114. sect. 2., and the ancient chapelries of Newcastle-under Lyme, Burslem, Whitmore, Bucknall, Bagnall, and Norton-in-the-Moors were constituted under the provisions of that Act separate rectories, leaving still to the parish church of Stoke-upon-Trent the two ancient chapelries of Lane End and Hanley. Those five rectories that had been severed from the parish church enjoy their rates unquestioned at the present moment, and the parish church of Stoke-upon-Trent has lost its rates for some time, and every attempt to collect a rate in that parish has been frustrated, not by the people resident around the parish church in its own proper district, but by the opposition offered to the rate from the outlying townships of Hanley and Lane End. The parishioners of those districts have come down and voted against the rate. No portion of it would go to support their own chapelries, and therefore they have successfully resisted the rate. Now those churches that were severed have their rates at the present time, and there are a number of new chapelries built in that parish under various Acts, principally 1 & 2 W. 4. cap. 38., the chapelries of Penkull, Fenton, Trent Vale, and Hart's Hill. Every one of those parishes or districts is a source of weakness to the parish church, because they oppose the rate for the parish church; whereas I have the authority of the clergy in those districts to state, that if they were severed they would at once lay a rate and collect it. And arguing from the fact that the rectories that have been severed enjoy their rates, I think they have just reason to entertain that opinion. I may state again, still further, that Shelton was constituted a rectory under a private Act of Parliament, and taken out of Hanley nominal district; it was made the rectory of Shelton, and it is called a rectory; but at the same time it has no rectorial tithes; it is endowed otherwise; it is virtually a district chapelry under Stoke: therefore the rate for Shelton must be laid at the parish church. Shelton, in consequence, never has any support for the sustentation of the fabric, because it has not been constituted into a separate and distinct parish; and I have further the authority of the curate of Stoke-upon-Trent, who says, "Separate us from Hanley and "Lane End, and at once we will lay our rate for the parish church, and get it too."

797. Are there not other reasons besides having the power to raise rates that make you desirous of separating your district more completely than it is now?—Yes; two or three reasons that I would simply refer to; and one is, the great objection and opposition that arises to the payment of double fees where the double fees are exacted from those new districts. The people have been at great expense to build the churches, and yet they find that they cannot enjoy from their own clergyman the various offices of the Church. Their associations naturally lead them to call upon their own minister for burials, marriages, and other offices, but they cannot have them without paying double fees.

798. Is that generally the case?—Yes. I may mention the case of Hart's Hill. The clergyman stated to me, or rather I asked him whether he had many marriages there, and he said, "No; seldom or ever any. One half of the fees must go to the parish church, "and the consequence is, that no person ever thinks of coming here to be married."

799. Are you not aware that double fees are illegal, unless sanctioned by Act of Parliament?—Yes; I am aware of that; but I think they are generally adopted as the only means of remunerating the clergy in the districts where they are collected.

800. Unless it was a large fee, it would have to be paid to the parish church altogether, would not it?—A single fee would have to be paid to the parish church, unless there is a special agreement between the incumbent of the district church and the mother church. With regard to Golden Hill, I have got now the privilege to marry, but it is on payment of a compensation to the incumbent of the district church. Before that we had no right to marry, and the consequences I conceive were highly injurious to our people; it has a tendency to lower our ministry in the eyes of our parishioners, when they find us incapable of extending to them all the offices of the Church; and this arises from the present partial division of parishes.

801. Do you find that parties still cling to marriage in the mother church, although there is no difference in the fees?—No. We had our church licensed a month ago, and we have had four banns of marriages published in the new district; a very fair average for our population. Our district being now defined, we shall be able to prevent many clandestine and irregular marriages.

802. Your church is constituted under an Act commonly called the "Patronage Act"?—Yes, it is.

803. That is a peculiar case, and your difficulty with respect to marriages has arisen from the particular defects of that Act?—Yes; but a great number of churches are built under the provisions of that Act. With the permission of the Commissioners, I will pass from the question of fees to another. I think that the division of parishes is most important, as tending to carry out the parochial system in its fulness, and also to promote the building of churches and the education of the children of the poor. I will state, in illustration of that,

that, a case in my own district. About twelve years ago, the chapel that I hold, a private one, was built by a gentleman of property in that neighbourhood. At that time, in the whole of the parish of Wolstanton, consisting of a population of 16,700 souls, and extending over an area of 10,000 acres, there was not a single daily school in connexion with the Church for the education of the children of the poor. There was a small endowed grammar school, with the privilege of twenty free scholars, and this was the only means of education. Since that time a number of churches have been erected in the parish, and there are now nine day schools for the children of the poor, and I believe that those schools have arisen from the division of that parish. The schools are, Kidsgrove, Golden Hill, White Hill, Wolstanton, Knutton Heath, Tunstall, Chesterton, Mowcop, and Newchapel, and those schools are now attended by not less than 1,500 children daily.

804. There is a school at Mowcop?—Yes; but there was not one twelve years ago.

805. The improvements that you are speaking of are effected under the existing laws in the districts as at present constituted; the Commissioners rather desired to have your opinion with respect to the further division of those districts to which you have alluded, and what advantages would arise by bringing the people under better parochial care, by a further and more complete division of those parishes?—That is, making the existing chapelries distinct parishes.

806. Yes. What power for pastoral care or parochial supervision would you obtain from a further subdivision? You are at present wholly independent as to spiritual jurisdiction?—Yes.

807. What advantage would be derived by further subdivision, as to the matter of pastoral care, and as to schools in particular?—I will explain to the Commissioners how subdivision of parishes would operate. Now we are connected to a certain extent with the original parishes by reason of the rates and fees, and that has a very serious deteriorating effect upon the clergy, in this way, that a great portion of the money that might be raised for the support of the education of the children of the poor is now alienated to another purpose, namely, the carrying on of divine worship in the church, and a continual drain for expenses connected with the district church. I am an incumbent, and the whole fund that we have available is 2*l.* 8*s.* yearly interest from sums set apart on the original outlay, and about 1*l.* derived from pew rents; a per centage on them. The whole sum that I have at my disposal for paying the officers of the church, maintaining the fabric, and providing the elements of the Lord's Supper, is 3*l.* 8*s.* The consequence is, that, notwithstanding we have annual sermons for expenses, yet we never collect sufficient funds to meet the demands upon us; and now I am in advance nearly 60*l.*, as I could not possibly ask my churchwarden to be at so great a loss. Our regular expenses are small, but sometimes we have casualties which plunge us in debt. It is injurious to a clergyman's usefulness that he should have his mind continually perplexed about meeting the expenses of his church, in addition to his schools and other charities.

808. You say that in your church the sum that arises from the per centage on pew rents and a small endowment is about 3*l.* 8*s.*; what is the whole annual expense of your service, including everything?—Between 20*l.* and 30*l.* a year, if there are no unlooked-for expenses We are subject to casualties. On one occasion we had a fire, which cost 100*l.* to repair damages; at another, slates blown off, &c. &c. The archdeacon came round last year, and did not approve of our spouting, and ordered it to be removed. I did it, and I paid for it.

809. You have stated that you paid rates to Wolstanton and to Tunstall?—Yes.

810. Do they not give you out of those rates a portion for the repairs of your church at Golden Hill?—Not a farthing, nor for the purchase of the sacramental wine and bread, nor for the washing of a surplice.

811. What is the annual expense of your church for clerks and elements?—I do not think that those expenses and the cleaning of the church amount to more than 20*l.* or 30*l.* a year.

812. Have you an organist?—Yes; we have only a barrel organ.

813. That money is raised by collections after sermons?—We try to do so, but as yet we have never covered our expenses, because there are always some extras which make our liability more than 20*l.*

814. To this extent you think that the schools and other charities of the parish might be benefited? I understood you to say that those who contributed for the maintenance of the worship and the repairs of the church would give their money for more immediate pastoral and parochial purposes?—Yes. The sum for expenses may appear small; yet in such a poor district as mine they are an object, where the funds for the daily schools and clothing clubs have to be provided; but, as I have shown, casualties may cause very heavy expenses to be incurred, for which the incumbent has to become personally liable. Besides that, I would add that it has an injurious effect upon my ministry, because here my people find that they are paying these rates, and they admit the principle of church rates, but they think that the rates they pay ought to go to support the church of their own district; they do not for a moment refuse the rate, and they never even attend to vote against it; but they feel strongly that after they have done this no portion of it is to go to the support of the church in their own district; therefore it operates against our ministry, and tends to

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alienate the affections of the people from the church, and consequently it weakens our influence with respect to all our charities. There was another point that I was asked about. I think that subdivision of the parishes would tend to create the building of churches. I would allude to one district for that purpose; the case of Hanley. There has not been a church built in that parish for 100 years, except the one at Shelton, which was built under a special Act of Parliament, and largely endowed out of the rectorial income of Stoke-upon-Trent. Since Sir Robert Peel's Act of the 6th and 7th Victoria came into operation, three new churches have been erected in that one neighbourhood of Hanley, and with them also there are schools which are in a state of progress. There division has tended to the building of churches; and if the people could understand that in severing these districts they were not to pay double rates, but support their new church it would tend still more to the building of these churches. The clergyman of a neighbouring district says he has been asked continually, "Shall we not have to pay double rates as soon as this new church is built? We will not have it, if that is the case."

815. Have you had an opportunity of observing the working of Sir Robert Peel's Act with reference to the districts that have been constituted under it in your neighbourhood?—Yes; and I think the principle of that bill is the most important that can possibly be imagined. I think, however poor districts may be, there are none poorer than those in Hanley, and there is no town in which there is less feeling towards the Church, and if churches can be built there under the provisions of that Act, no district in England need despair. The new churches are situated in the poorest parts of the locality.

816. Was much money raised towards that object in the district?—Yes; a considerable sum.

817. You mean by "the principle of that Act" the principle of fixing a clergyman within a given district, and giving him the pastoral superintendence of a portion of that district, and allowing the church to grow out of that state of things as the result of his ministry?—Yes; beginning with his lectures in the school, and making the people feel the importance and value of religion.

818. Did the Commissioners understand you to say that your principal reason for wishing the existing districts to be further subdivided was to have power to raise separate rates?—That, in connexion with the independence of the clergyman of the district; his complete independence and separation from the parish church. And I desire to convey to the Commissioners my strongest conviction, that it is essential for the best and eternal interests of our people that our districts should be distinct parishes. The clergyman will feel a deeper interest in his charge; they will be more entirely his; he will go into their houses with more authority and influence; he will know them better, and must necessarily feel a deeper interest in their temporal and everlasting good. If he is controlled by connexion with another clergyman, however slight, this feeling is weakened. It has often astonished me how soon a new congregation become attached to their own church and clergyman.

819. He is spiritually independent and ecclesiastically independent now, is he not?—But as long as the rank, the rates, and the fees remain, he is not independent; he is not separate, and that destroys his independence in a great measure. I may refer to the parish of Burslem, where there is a district chapel connected with the parish church. The connexion of this district church with the parish church has a most injurious tendency; and it is impossible to suppose that the interests of a district will be always consulted to the same extent as those of the parish church. It is therefore for that reason, among many others, I think that a division is desirable, to let the people understand which is the clergyman of the parish, and that he should have freedom of action in his locality. If he is to be intrusted with the care of souls at all, let him have the power of giving full efficiency and character to his ministry.

820. You are aware that in the case of Burslem, to which you have alluded, and many others, that the cure of souls is complete; it is exercised altogether exclusively; there is no possible interference with the minister of Burslem parish church?—I am aware of that, as far as the simple cure of souls is concerned; but we cannot separate it. The minister of the district is mixed up with the mother church and wardens for the repairs of his church and various expenses, and that is a fruitful source of a very great deal of difference of opinion, and it works injuriously upon his ministry, for whatever brings a minister into collision wth any portion of his people is injurious. And whilst on this point I would also allude to a subject of much interest and some difficulty. Where a parish is divided, the inhabitants of the new districts have sittings in the parish church. I think this right ought to cease, yet at the same time an equivalent accommodation ought to be provided for them in the new church. If this could be done a great cause of complaint would be removed.

821. You have mentioned that there was a double rate in your district; what is the amount of the entire church rate?—I do not know. There is one individual in my chapelry who has paid his rates to the amount of 40*l.*, but that I believe was for more than one year. For some time the church rates have been irregularly collected. A very bad plan indeed.

822. Have you any idea what would be the rate in the district connected with the mother church, supposing it were to maintain its own church entirely?—No. It would be a very small rate that would be required.

823. Of course the rate in that district connected with the mother church would be much increased if the rates from the subordinate districts were taken away?—Of course it would. I think there would be a strong feeling towards the maintenance of the parish church. I consider that if this division does not take place soon we shall lose the rates altogether, as in the case of Stoke-upon-Trent.

824. It included districts not connected with it which combined to prevent the rate?—Yes.

825. Do you think that the boundaries are properly described; that the present districts connected with the mother church, which you would separate, would be sufficiently well defined, on the supposition that a church was to be maintained by rates from its own district?—Yes; I think the boundaries, generally speaking, are very fairly defined. In some parishes perhaps they might usefully be readjusted.

826. Do you think that any further subdivision is needful in your parish?—Not in my immediate district; but in the parish at large I think there are several new churches wanted. In Tunstall, one of the towns in the parish of Wolstanton, there are 9,000 people and only one church. I think there are one or two districts required.

827. Would not the rate on the mother church be about four times as much as it is now if all these districts were cut off from it?—It would be considerably more on that district, but I do not think the people would generally object to it. The mother district will always possess overwhelming advantages over any new districts; for example, in the sittings, income, and many other things.

828. What number of souls do you think one clergyman would be able to manage, so as to visit and know them all?—I think not more than 2,000 efficiently.

829. I am supposing, in the case of Tunstall district parish, that the two chapelries would be cut off as well as your own district?—It would make a considerable deduction, no doubt, from the rates now received by Tunstall; but then the church-rate principle would be strengthened by the more just distribution of the rates collected.

830. Would not the old church require a considerable outlay to keep it in repair?—Not so much. I do not think it requires a very great deal. They collect the rate now irregularly, and then it comes heavily.

831. Do you think it desirable in many cases to readjust the boundaries of the districts connected with the mother church, in order that the church rate might not press in a manner that would be unfair upon the inhabitants of the districts, prior to any separation that would involve the question of church rate?—I do, in some cases. I have heard no complaint from the incumbent in the parish church. I think there is a great feeling in our neighbourhood, that if there is not a better adjustment of the church rates that they shall lose them altogether; and in my district there is a strong feeling in favour of the maintenance of the rates. I believe in many instances the wardens of the mother churches would be thankful if these districts where cut off, because they fear that they will lose the rate altogether for the parish church, as has been the case in the parish of Stoke-upon-Trent, namely, that all the districts that have been entirely severed have their rates, and Stoke-upon-Trent itself has lost them.

832. Do you think a compulsory or an enabling Act for raising separate rates would be preferable?—I would leave the law of church rates as at present, only permitting the new parishes to have their own rates. In the formation of districts, the view I take is this, that it might be left discretionary with the incumbent of the district to apply for a separation or otherwise from the mother church; and I would propose to vest the power of the separation in the bishop of the diocese, or the Ecclesiastical Commissioners, on the application of the incumbent of the district.

833. You would think it best to have an enabling Act?—As far as the dividing a parish is concerned; but I would not attempt to interfere with the principle of church rates as it stands at present, but would say that this parish shall be severed for all ecclesiastical purposes from the mother church, and be made into a distinct and separate parish, and have all the rights and privileges and rates the same as the mother church.

834. That seems as if you would make it compulsory? Did not the Commissioners understand you to say that every parish should have power to apply to a properly constituted body, say the body of Commissioners, who, with the consent of the bishop, should grant to that district the power of raising separate rates?—The power I would vest with the bishop and the Commissioners is as to the separation of the parish; but the question of rates I would leave thus: wherever a separation took place, let the rates go with the district church. The Act would enable the Commissioners to divide the parish; but the rates of a district in all instances should go, as a matter of course, to the new division.

835. With respect to certain existing districts, such as yours, what kind of Act do you think would answer your purpose? You wish to raise separate rates for your district; what kind of legislative measure do you think would meet your view the best? Should it be a compulsory measure, or only depend upon the consents of the people of your own district and of the parish to which you belong, the district parish and the original parish?—On my petitioning whatever body might be constituted for the purpose of carrying out the Act, in

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case they saw fit to grant me a parish, then I would say, carry the rates to the new parish; they should go with that grant.

836. Without making the consent of the parish from which you would separate necessary?—Certainly.

837. Have you not drawn up a sketch of a Bill?—Yes; in conjunction with other clergymen. I have submitted it to Lord Ashley. The provisions of that Bill were to give power to the bishop of the diocese, on the memorial of the clergymen of a district, to make separate parishes. I do not contemplate the formation of new ones, but to make existing districts into separate and distinct parishes, and that the incumbents of those districts should assume the title of either vicars or rectors, according to the parish from which they were severed. That was the case at Shelton. Though it is only in reality a district chapelry, it is called the rectory of Shelton. I think it is desirable to abolish the name of perpetual curate, and to let the clergyman have all the weight and influence which may attach to the name of vicar or rector of his parish.

838. Is there anything further that you wish to state to this Commission?—I believe I have nearly touched on all the points that I wish to mention. I think it is exceedingly desirable if any substitute could be found for the pew-rents in those poor districts, something like what has been done in the case of Sir Robert Peel's districts. I may name the parish and district of Golden Hill, built under the Patronage Act, and endowed with 1,000*l.* by the patron. The pew-rents of that church tend very little to the support of the clergyman, but I think they operate very much against the usefulness of that church in the district where it is built. The portion of income derived from pew-rents is little more than 20*l.*, and that excessively uncertain. I think if there could be some substitute provided, to purchase up for the poor the sittings in those churches, it would be desirable; and the ground for that opinion is this:—In my own church at Kidsgrove the sittings are all free, and that church from the first has been exceedingly well attended; people have come to attend the church regularly, and it has made much way amongst the population generally; and I attribute that in a great measure to the church being perfectly free, and the sittings unappropriated, so much so, that even the seat of the patron himself is not reserved; when the people come it is open for them.

839. Do the same persons habitually occupy the same sittings?—Yes, very generally they settle down into the same sittings, and no person disturbs the regular comers of the church.

840. A man and his wife would occupy the same seats?—Yes; they sit generally in the same sittings. I am speaking after an experience of twelve years.

841. Who assigns them the sittings?—The sexton just shows them into the sittings.

842. Do not you find that they prefer giving something, however trifling, to give them a kind of status?—Yes; and I do think that in many cases it would be desirable, if it were something sufficiently small, so as not to act as an hindrance to them.

843. Something in the discretion of the minister and churchwardens?—Yes; some mere nominal payment for the poor. In our neighbourhood of Golden Hill many of the people are very poor, and cannot afford to pay 20*s.* or 25*s.* for a pew to accommodate seven or eight people.

844. Have you ever heard a desire expressed on the part of your parishioners that they should have the means of obtaining a property in a sitting at a small price?—No; I never found it in Kidsgrove. They come to the church, and they take their chance wherever they may be put. The church is always well attended.

845. In general would it not be more likely to attach a larger number of regular attendants at the church?—Yes; but here, that is, at Kidsgrove, the people are all nearly of one class; with the exception of the patron of the parish, they are nearly all working people, and the regular attendants nearly always occupy the same seats; but as a general rule I think a small pew-rent preferable.

846. Are any of your free seats in Golden Hill appropriated and yet free?—Yes; we let the grown-up children sit in the free seats.

847. Not for the adults?—Not for the adults.

848. What good would arise from destroying the pew-rents in your church at Golden Hill? The persons who pay them would still probably sit in the same sittings, and would have them virtually appropriated to them?—I would not destroy them altogether, but reduce them. In fact at once, if I could get the rates, I would reduce the pew-rents so as to make them more beneficial to the people, and encourage them to come and pay a small sum, and give them a kind of interest in them.

849. Do you think that the amount of the pew-rents diminishes the number of church goers?—No question of it.

850. But supposing the people were wealthy, that would not be the case?—No, I should say not, where they were able to pay.

851. Are they similarly placed at Shelton with respect to rates?—No. Shelton is a district chapelry, and Shelton church has, I believe, a claim for rates on the parish church of Stoke-on-Trent.

852. They do not get them?—No.

853. How do they raise large expenses for their repairs?—By continual collections.

854. By sermons?—Yes; four a year.

855. Have you found that the clergymen similarly circumstanced with yourself entertain the same opinion as to the division of parishes?—Yes; and that was very strongly expressed in our county. The clergy of districts numbering about 173,000 inhabitants signed a memorial to the Lord Bishop of Lichfield in favour of this division. We conceived that it would add greatly to our influence, and that we should have strong motives for pressing the church-rate principle upon our people. I believe it would tend to remove much of the present opposition to church-rates, and that the people would cheerfully support the churches if we gave them an object of their own, namely, a local church for their rate.

856. Did you memorialize the Bishop of Lichfield on the subject of the Bill a copy of which you have laid upon the table?—Yes; to the Lord Bishop of Lichfield, the Archbishop of Canterbury and the First Lord of the Treasury. A memorial was sent by the clergy presiding over 173,000 souls, and it was signed, with only one exception, by incumbents of districts circumstanced in this way. This, exclusive of the district of Wolverhampton. The clergy there presiding over 100,000 souls would have cheerfully joined in the memorial, only they had just obtained by special Act all and more than we are seeking for. There was a petition sent from Lancashire, signed by the incumbents of some of the most populous parts of the county, including Manchester parish with 400,000 souls, and other counties, Yorkshire, Cheshire, &c.

857. From that and from other causes you believe that the clergy generally, circumstanced as you are with respect to those district churches, are all in favour of an entire separation and division of parishes?—Yes, without almost an exception. I consulted many clergymen in various parts of England; and whilst there was a reluctance on their part to the adoption of memorials, not wishing to emerge from their retirement, yet at the same time they entertained a strong sense of the injury that their churches were suffering, and of the impossibility of carrying them on under the present system. If I have failed to convey to the Commissioners the effect of this upon my ministerial operations as well as the fabric of my church, I feel the effect of it myself. It impedes my power of educating the children, and doing many things conducive to the spiritual welfare of my people. The funds and collections now absorbed for church expenses and the public services drain much of the resources for our schools and other charities. We tire our people by continual collections, and they cannot see why all the rates they pay are to be applied to other churches. Besides all these extra drains, they yet cannot enjoy at their own local church the rights and offices it ought to convey without having to pay double fees; and it certainly lowers their own clergyman in their eyes when thus continually they are forced to see his inferior and disadvantageous position.

858. You mean this; that they are called upon for a rate for a church to which they do not belong, and that is a source of discontent?—For two churches.

859. And then again you call upon them by collections to pay for your own church?—Yes.

860. Do they pay the two rates?—Yes; but they complain of it. They pay it under a very strong protest.

861. So that there is discontent, in the first place, at having to pay to the mother church?—Yes.

862. And for having to contribute money to a parish which they think ought to be provided by a rate of its own?—Yes.

863. And also for having to pay for schools?—Yes; and it weakens our influence upon our church people, and whatever tends to weaken that impairs our power of carrying out our ministrations acceptably to them. This meets us in every direction; and, in addition to the difficulties I have so largely referred to, I may add, our minds are often harassed by receiving directions for repairs, &c. from our archdeacon, which we have no means of carrying into effect for want of funds. If we appeal to our people strongly they may answer, "We do pay our church-rates; why are they not available for our church?"

864. Would they look upon you as something less than a vicar or rector, with the name of perpetual curate?—They would look on us as something less. That title puzzles the poor very much; and I think it is an important thing, whatever will tend to elevate the clergy in any way.

865. You do not apprehend any inconvenience from great expectations of assistance being excited by the adoption of a name which is usually appropriated to persons having larger pecuniary means?—No; not more than at present.

866. For instance; if a person were entitled "rector," without any proportionate means, would he not be exposed to the inconvenience of a title that presumed more wealth than he possessed?—I do not think it would affect that. The Bill proposes that the title should not be given until there is a certain amount of endowment.

867. Supposing such a Bill as that which you contemplate were introduced; do you anticipate any opposition to it from the incumbents of old parishes?—I can only speak of what I have heard from them generally. They admit very strongly the justice of the case.

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and many of them think that it weakens their position to remain as they are, and that they shall lose their rates altogether if there is not an entire division soon effected.

868. Some of the incumbents of the old parishes take a contrary view, and are opposed to that?—Yes; and a case of that kind has occurred within my experience in the parish of Blackburn, and that is the very case of all others that I would quote as illustrating my principle. In the parish of Blackburn they have lost their rates altogether, and if they are ever to be recovered it must be by a subdivision of the parish, giving the people an individual interest in the church that they attend.

869. And yet the incumbent, Dr. Whittaker, is strongly opposed to the measures you have in view?—Yes; because he thinks it is for the benefit of the parish that every incumbent in that district should be, to a certain extent, under his power; and all the people should be drawn from those outlying hamlets to get married in the parish church. We think that is a weakness, and tends to many improper marriages taking place. He thinks it strengthens him. One thing is quite certain, that the clergy of this parish conceive their position of dependence, whilst it has not promoted unity, has proved most injurious to their usefulness and the interests of their populous chapelries; and I most humbly conceive that their just cause of complaint should be removed, even at the loss of a little of Dr. Whittaker's estimate of vicarial importance, and the vested rights of mother churches.

870. You are aware that the celebration of marriages at those district churches is altogether a separate question from their having separate rates?—When you separate parishes completely you give a right to those districts to have marriages celebrated. The division must be a perfect one.

871. Most of the districts have at present the power of solemnizing marriages, have they not?—Yes, on payment of double fees.

872. Upon the subject of fees, what you suggest is, that the right which at present exists in an incumbent of the mother church to the fees for those offices should be abolished altogether?—Certainly.

873. Whatever fees are paid in respect to those offices, when they are performed by the ministers of the district churches, should be paid to them for their own benefit?—Yes; and we should be content, in the districts already established, if that principle was applied to our district churches and chapelries which is laid down in Sir Robert Peel's Bill; namely, that our districts shall be separate parishes, and that we shall have the power to perform all the offices of the Church on the same terms as has been conceded to the new districts under Sir Robert Peel's Bill. The subdivision of a parish brings a clergyman into immediate intercourse with all his people; and in the district with which I am connected I may state, to show the effects of partial subdivision, and if it had been more complete it would have been more satisfactory, but as the result of that subdivision, and bringing the clergyman's influence to bear upon the masses of his people, not as a general mass, but bringing him and making him personally acquainted with them all, the result is, that during twelve years there have been but four commitments from the village of Kidsgrove, with which I am connected; four commitments in twelve years; two of them were for three months, in 1842, one for a month only, and a serious case of commitment of a person who came in from the iron districts of Scotland; those have been the four in that period; and during that time there has only increased one beer-shop in the neighbourhood, though the population has nearly doubled; and, in addition, the miners of the district have now built a vast number of houses out of their own earnings; and I attribute all to the influence of a church and of schools commensurate with the wants and requirements of the people. I have every Sunday at the school, out of a population of 1,600, about 400 children on the books.

874. Have you ever acted as a curate under another minister?—Yes, I have.

875. Have you felt the difference between acting independently, and in a subordinate situation, as to the activity and energy that you could throw into your work?—Yes; and I think it is a most important point, as soon as a clergyman is thoroughly acquainted with his work, to place him in a position of independence; he at once feels more and more the importance of his post, and becomes more desirous to discharge his duties in it; the people also look up to him, and respect his ministrations much more, and he has more influence.

876. You think that if you had five individuals to dispose of in a given population, you would rather that each of those five should have a separate sphere of duty independently, than that four of them should be acting under the control and distributed at the discretion of a superior minister?—Most distinctly. At present, in my own limited way, I have a curate at Golden Hill, and I feel it to be a great difficulty, and impediment in my position, that the district is not severed for a regular incumbent; and as the incumbent of that church I do conceive that it would be much more desirable and beneficial to the interests of the people of the parish if it were so. Besides, you will always find that an incumbent even with the same income will cling longer to his charge than a mere stipendiary curate, and I feel most strongly that it is for the interest of the Church and the people, that perpetual changes of the clergy should be discouraged; new curates have all the work to begin over again, and they are a long time becoming acquainted with the people, and the parish, and without that knowledge they can effect little with their poor parishioners and their children.

877. Wherever a church exists you would have the congregational and parochial feeling combined by some person ministering to the congregation as their head?—I would distinctly.

distinctly. I think the importance of having smaller districts and clergymen charged with the cure of souls in those districts, and the independence of those districts, will tend greatly to the enlargement and extension of the Church, and the best interests of our holy religion, and particularly the advancement of education.

878. Have you had any experience as to the comparative facilities of raising schools in large districts or in subdivided districts?—I have had a great deal to do with schools; as one of the inspectors of schools for the diocese of the Bishop of Lichfield I am brought greatly into connexion with education. In my own locality I have under my inspection some thirty-six or thirty-eight schools.

879. Have you ever made any observation as to the proportion or efficiency of the schools according to the extent of the district to which they are attached?—Yes; I am satisfied that if you make small districts you will build more schools, and collect more children; for instance, I have in my chapelry with 2,300 people more children in school than the incumbent of a neighbouring parish with 9,000 people has in his. I have about 700; he has not above 500 in his parish, which is more than three times the size of mine.

880. Have you a third of the population at your schools?—Yes; I speak now of the Sunday-school children; and all under instruction.

881. Do they all belong to you?—The greater part of them do; there are some out of the adjoining parishes.

882. Are you not taking the infant school into the estimate?—Yes; the whole of the children.

883. And those who stay with you after they have passed through the day school?—Yes; there are about 300 Sunday-scholars that work during the week.

884. Has it occurred to you that the smallness of the income which must of necessity belong to the ministers of these divided and subdivided parishes is a hindrance to their usefulness?—Yes, very serious indeed. Unless a clergyman, like myself, has some other resources, he could not maintain his position at all. My principal income is derived from the private episcopal chapel of Kidsgrove, which I hold. My income from my incumbency of Golden Hill only pays my curate.

885. And that, pro tanto, is an objection to the division?—That is the great difficulty in the way, the want of income to these churches; and in no better way could the funds available from the Ecclesiastical Commission be applied than to augmenting these small livings to 200*l.* per annum; and it is my impression that the case of existing districts should first be settled before new districts are created.

886. The income you conceive to be more required in consequence of the division of parishes, the number of clergymen being the same?—Yes. If you make a clergyman the incumbent of a district, he will necessarily require more means at his disposal than if he were a curate under the parent incumbent.

887. You mean with reference to the demands made upon him for charity?—Yes; and various expenses that the clergy have very often to bear; the constant provision for their schools, and other things of that kind.

888. And, perhaps, also you would think that when a clergyman becomes an independent minister he incurs greater expenses than he would as a curate. Perhaps he may be induced to marry, which he would not do if he were a curate?—Yes; I think it is so generally.

889. Upon the whole you are decidedly of opinion that the creation of districts and the division of parishes and the placing of them under wholly independent ministers would be a great gain to the Church?—Yes, I do. I do not know whether I have explained to the Commissioners clearly enough that one point about education. I do not wish to exaggerate my own parish with regard to education, but I maintain, and have ever done so, and I can see it from the statistics of other districts where I am inspector, that in proportion as the district is small so much larger will be the amount of results from the labours of the minister; that is, the pressure of his influence is more generally felt; and a district of 2,000 people will yield a larger number of scholars, in proportion, under one clergyman, than a district which contained 4,000 or 6,000 under one minister. His influence will bear more generally upon the parish, and this is the only way to touch and influence the masses of the people.

890. You are quite sure that a parish of 20,000 people divided into four parishes would yield far more efficient and larger schools than if it continued as one parish?—Yes; no question of it. The parish of Wolstanton shows that.

891. Do the Commissioners understand you to say that a clergyman with only 2,000 persons under his charge will have a larger proportion of scholars than a clergyman with 4,000?—Yes; it is very frequently the case,

Adjourned.

Archdeacon Hale.

1st June 1849.

Friday, 1st June 1849.

The EARL OF HARROWBY IN THE CHAIR.

The Venerable ARCHDEACON HALE examined.

892. YOU are now the Archdeacon of London?—Yes.

893. You have a parochial charge?—Yes.

894. Will you state what it is?—The parish of St. Giles's Cripplegate, in the city of London.

895. Your population is 13,000, is not it?—Yes

896. What church accommodation have you?—There is only one church already consecrated.

897. Accommodating what number?—About 1,000 persons.

898. What amount of open accommodation is there out of that number?—Though the number of open benches is not great a large part of the church may be considered as open, many of the pews not being appropriated; accommodation is afforded in them to a great number of the common people.

899. They are pews with closed doors?—Yes.

900. Have you been long the vicar of this parish?—Only two years.

901. Had you had previous experience of a large population?—Not in the capacity of an incumbent.

902. Have you formed an opinion as to the expediency or desirableness of subdividing large parishes, or keeping them rather under the control of some chief minister, having clergymen under him?—As a member of the Church Commission, as archdeacon, and as a patron through my connexion with the cathedral church of St. Paul, proceedings for the subdivision of parishes have often come before me.

903. What opinion have you formed upon the expediency of such a course?—The only opinion I can form is this, that the method of subdivision of any parish must be determined by the particular circumstances of that parish, there being scarcely any two parishes so apparently alike that we should be justified, without careful inquiry, in applying the same principle of subdivision to them both.

904. What would you consider to be the governing facts in deciding that question?—One very important point to be considered is this, whether the population be a newly formed population, or whether it be an old one, settled upon a spot which has been inhabited for one or two centuries. I would say that a parish, the site of which is now being built upon, or that has only been built upon for the last twenty years, will be in a different position and more suited for subdivision than one which, like several of the London parishes, has been inhabited in the same way for a century or more.

905. What are the governing reasons for preferring one course or the other in either case?—Due regard to the habits and feelings of the parties who are to be put under fresh care, and to the relation which the incumbent of the parish stands in to the whole of the population.

906. In what case would you subdivide, and in what case would you not?—Exactly in proportion as the tie between the people and the mother church is less strongly formed in consequence of their having recently come upon the spot the subdivision may be of a more decided character. Supposing a parish freshly built upon, and new people coming there, there can be little feeling of respect or attachment either to the rector or churchwardens of the old parish. In such a case there would be no inconvenience in placing among them a new minister and forming a fresh nucleus of society; but if the parish be one containing a population long settled in it, it then comes to be considered, whether you should entirely dissolve the connexion existing between the people of the entire district and the incumbent of the mother church, and destroy the unity of the parish.

907. Where parochial associations are already established, you would not disturb them, but when they are to be created, you would prefer the establishment of a new community?—Just so.

908. To what number would you limit the population to be assigned to the superior charge of one clergyman?—I cannot estimate that by number at all. My opinion is this, that supposing a parish to have an ancient population and to be of such an extent as to be within the power of a rector to manage, he ought to be assisted by stipendiary curates serving in chapels of ease.

909. What do you consider would be the limit of manageability?—That will depend upon the nature of the habitation, and the manner in which the parish is built upon.

910. Can

910. Can you conceive it extending to 30,000 or 100,000?—I can form no estimate by number. The greater the density of the population, the less difficulty is there in managing it, by the superintendence of a superior incumbent having curates under him,

911. Suppose the case of towns where the population is by hypothesis dense, what other circumstance would make you consider that the parochial limit should be confined to 30,000 rather than 100,000, or extended beyond that, or contracted?—I am not accustomed to measure things by numbers.

912. By what other elements would you measure in this case?—I would measure rather by locality. I mean, by the fact of the streets being narrow or wide, the houses inhabited by one or many families, and all parts of the parish being easy or difficult of access; very likely the position of the mother church or of the vicarage-house may make a difference, and tend either to hinder or to establish an union between the clergyman of the mother church and the whole of his people. If a parish were extended in length, but of narrow breadth, and contained a very large population, and if the mother church and the rector's residence were at one end of that parish, it might be presumed that the clergyman would be less known at the end of such a long parish than if his church and residence were in the middle of it; and in such a case the extreme part of the parish would seem to be, as it were, prepared for separation, and the establishment of a separate cure.

913. You consider that geographical position, rather than the original elements of the parochial system, should determine the question?—Just so.

914. Do you consider that the influence of the Church is more felt where a number of subordinate clergymen are acting under one head, than where there are a number of clergymen, each acting independently in his own separate sphere?—If the population is old, that is, a settled population, and already united among themselves, and in communication with their rector, I think that the way in which his influence may be extended is through stipendiary curates, keeping up as it were through them the tie existing between him and the whole of his people.

915. You would have additional spiritual accommodation furnished to a large population by additional churches, they being chapels of ease, with stipendiary curates appointed by the superior clergyman himself, and removable by him with the consent of the bishop?—Exactly so; and provided that the population be such as I have described, I may say that the opinion I now express was that entertained by my old friend Dr. Richards, vicar of Saint Martin in the Fields. It was in conversation with him many years ago, (he has been dead now several years,) that I remember his laying down these principles as those which he at that time wished to be acted upon in his own parish.

916. Is there not a difficulty in that system of keeping ministers of separate districts sufficiently long in their position, not only to become acquainted with the people, but for the people to form an attachment for them?—I do not know; that will depend so much upon the characters of the particular individuals.

917. Would they remain as long in the position of stipendiary curates as they would in the position of independent ministers?—Certainly not so long; but I have a sort of prepossession in my mind in favour of, perhaps, more frequent changes of this sort than other persons would approve. On some accounts I think a change of curates a desirable thing. We are many of us apt to be saddened and disheartened, whether we are incumbents or curates, by the small progress which we seem to have made; and therefore to have a man come in to take up the work with a little fresh zeal may be very useful, tending to give confidence and restore hope to those whom disappointment may have tempted in some little degree to relax their labours.

918. Your own parish is very small in size?—Yes.

919. Are there not, in your own parish, districts where the inhabitants know little of the parochial authorities or of the clergymen?—I should say not. I think there is no part of the parish where the parochial authorities, or the clergy, are wholly unknown.

920. In that part where a new church has been built, by the Exchange, St. Bartholomew, is there not a considerable district there where they know little or nothing of the clergymen or of the parochial authorities?—I should say quite the reverse. It ought to be borne in mind that mine is not merely a very ancient parish, but one very well endowed. In the parochial schools 220 children are clothed, and these children are scattered all over the parish. The vicar of the parish is one of the trustees of each of those schools, and by that means he has a communication with them. The number of men and women who have been brought up in these schools, and who are living in the parish, is very considerable. They are perfectly acquainted with the parochial authorities, and with their minister.

921. You consider that there is a great advantage derived by St. Giles's Cripplegate, with regard to the position in which it is placed, from these large endowments and the influence that they give to the parochial authorities?—Yes; I think our population is less migratory than in any parish in London. It is the commonest thing, when you visit any person, to say, How long have you lived here? and you are told, ten, fifteen, twenty, and thirty years

922. Have you any endowment which supersedes the necessity for a church rate, or do you collect a church rate?—What is now called the church rate is a rate made to pay a commutation in lieu of tithes.

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923. Is it a permanent commutation?—Yes.

924. A fixed sum?—A sum varying according to the price of corn.

925. It is a rent-charge upon the property?—Yes. Under the Act of Parliament for the commutation of tithes, the vestry has power to provide all things necessary for the support of the church.

926. Out of that rate?—Yes.

927. From your knowledge as Archdeacon of London, can you inform the Commission whether there are many parishes so advantageously situated as Cripplegate with reference to endowments, and the means of maintaining the church without any assistance from church rates?—I think it is the case in many parishes in that part of the city of London which is within the walls.

928. But not in the outskirts of London?—No.

929. From your observation, does not an increase of buildings seem to destroy the individuality of a parish?—No doubt about it.

930. Therefore you have not the advantage of the parochial system in a very extensive place, and with an extensive population?—Allowing that the population is increasing, and the habitation of the parish is in the act of being more extended, I think it is likely that exactly as the population increases, and the number of houses becomes greater, and new people come in, that the influence of a rector will be constantly diminishing. But with a fixed and old population there is no extent of district over which the influence of him who presides at the head may not be extended.

931. What is the nature of the influence which a superior clergyman exercises in that case? Is it the exercise of the influence of the clergyman of the parish, or rather of the influence of a bishop?—The influence of character and station, which seems, however indirect may be its application, to have a direct influence, and to produce positive moral and religious effects upon the population.

932. What number of curates assist in your parish?—Two.

933. What schools are there?—There is a clothed boys school, containing 100, and a clothed girls school for about 120. There is the White Street National School, which may have another 150 children. I have myself four dame schools, in which there are about children; and there are a number of private schools, of which I know very little.

934. You mean schools for the poor?—Yes, for the humbler classes.

935. You have no National Schools?—Yes; there is the White Street National School.

936. There are several dissenting chapels, are there not?—Several. I think that in former times the parish must have been inhabited by many wealthy presbyterian families.

937. What number of persons can one stipendiary curate well oversee?—I cannot form any estimate

938. Would you not say that some of those dissenting chapels may have sprung up from want of more church room?—I think not; they are ancient chapels.

939. The population is equally ancient, is it not?—To a great degree it is; many of the cottages are certainly a hundred years old.

940. The church accommodation has long been below the population in fact?—I should think so.

941. That may possibly be one cause of the increase of dissent there?—I am not aware that dissent has so increased.

942. If the population is as old as the dissent, and there has only been one church throughout the parish, it is possible that the religious wants of the people may have led them to look to dissent in consequence?—I think not.

943. Have the dissenters many children receiving education in their schools?—I think it probable that they have many. There is a large Wesleyan institution, and a school. There may be in and around the parish six or seven dissenting meetings, but not of recent origin.

944. Have you a large poor population in Cripplegate?—Yes, a very large population, but rather of labourers than of mechanics.

945. Then the school accommodation of the parish can hardly be adequate to its wants?—No. What we want most, and what I am endeavouring to establish is, dame schools in the numerous alleys of the parish. There is a large infant school in Cripplegate Within, and we are assisted by the Packington School in Saint Botolph, Aldersgate, and by that of Saint Thomas Charterhouse. On the whole I have reason to believe, that though within the parish there are not as many schools as are to be desired, a very considerable number of children are sent by their parents to the different schools in the neighbourhood.

946. You have no reason to think that they are more illiterate than their neighbours?—No, I think not.

947. Do

947. Do they show it by that test which has been referred to, namely, making their marks on the occasion of their marriages, instead of signing their names?—It is a most difficult thing to identify the people who come to be married as being, properly speaking, inhabitants of and belonging to the parish.

948. In other words, clandestine marriages are the rule, and not the exception?—I do not think that such marriages ought to be called clandestine marriages. The practice of not being married in their own parish is attributable to a good motive rather than a bad motive. It is not the concealment of marriage, but privacy of it, which is sought. Those parties do not like to encounter the disagreeable publicity which attends in that line of life the being married at home.

949. Have you any organized system of visitation in your parish?—No.

950. How do you deal with a population of 13,000?—At present I have been able to do very little, except through my own individual charities. There is no regular system of visitation, and yet I think that few cases occur of distress which are not in some degree relieved.

951. When an individual desires to have a visit from the clergyman, he is attended?—Yes; but the visitation of families is a most difficult thing to practise. There is a completely labouring population. At six o'clock in the morning men and women go out, and do not return till six or seven o'clock at night, and it is most difficult to meet them; the wives and young children are left at home. The habit of living in the parish and working elsewhere extends in a great degree throughout the parish; which is therefore, in a great degree, only a vast dormitory.

952. Have you not established a third service since you have been the Vicar of Cripplegate on the Lord's day?—Yes.

953. Do you find that many more persons visit the church who did not attend before?—But a small number, so inveterate a thing is habit. It was with the will and consent of the parish that the service should be in the evening, instead of in the afternoon. When I came there, I did not like to disturb the evening service; but I thought it was very improper that there should not be a third service, and I have established it now for nearly two years; but the number of persons who attend the afternoon service, besides children, is but small, from 100 to 150. I imagine the reason why they attend in that small number is that the dinner hour is two o'clock, and the people are not prepared to come to the service at three o'clock. Servants cannot get away at three o'clock. By degrees it may be more attended.

954. You mentioned that you thought it a desirable arrangement to have chapels of ease served by stipendiary curates?—Yes.

955. There is a difficulty, is there not, under the Church Building Act; there has been a change?—I believe that the old law is almost annulled.

956. Will you explain to the Commissioners the change which has taken place?—I think that the powers which existed under the common law of building chapels of ease, have fallen into desuetude. Supposing that a parish or individual wished to build a chapel of ease, I think they would be told that doubts were entertained whether they could proceed without the sanction of Her Majesty's Commissioners, and without complying with the requisitions of one or more of the Church Building Acts; so that in practice, I think, the people of a parish have hardly the same power of building for themselves a chapel of ease that they had formerly.

957. What was the common law right before the change?—Formerly I believe that all that the parishioners had to do, was to cause a chapel to be built upon freehold ground, and to procure the consecration of it by the bishop; the cure remaining in the incumbent, and he being bound to provide a curate for the duty, or to perform it in his own person.

958. Might that have been done without the consent of the incumbent of the mother church?—I think not.

959. It was liable to the incumbent's veto?—Of course.

960. He was a party to the petition?—Yes.

961. And he became the incumbent of the chapel?—Yes, if it was simply a chapel of ease.

962. He became the incumbent and supplied the services of the church?—Yes.

963. Now the minister of the chapel of ease is the incumbent, is he not?—Yes; by the recent statute law I believe almost entirely so.

964. Had those chapels of ease a claim upon the church rates?—I will not say that they had a claim upon the church rates, but they were of course supported by the church rates. The parishioners could then burden themselves with the maintenance of that chapel, and make themselves liable to repair it.

965. Did it require the consent of the majority of the vestry to establish a chapel, as it was supposed to require a majority of the vestry to vote a church rate?—I consider it must have been so.

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966. An individual could not plant a chapel of ease in a parish, but it would require the consent of the incumbent and of a majority of the parish vestry?—I think so, unless he endowed it with the consent of the bishop.

967. Suppose an incumbent had funds provided to build a chapel of ease under the old law, what would be the position of that chapel?—A great deal would depend upon the consent of the parishioners being given to burden the parish with the maintenance of it. In the case of a chapel of ease in a township, the inhabitants of that particular township would agree to support their own chapel. This I conceive to be the origin of many large chapelries in Lancashire which are still amenable to the church rate of the mother church, maintaining their own chapel for their own ease, but the curate being appointed by the incumbent of the mother church.

968. Have you a church building in your parish?—Yes; a church is built in my parish under the Act of Parliament for taking down the church of Saint Bartholomew Exchange. The endowment for that new church consists of the interest of a certain sum of money which was produced by the sale of the glebe of Saint Bartholomew Exchange, and it is invested in the hands of the governors of Queen Anne's Bounty, and produces an income of about 300*l.* a year, and the incumbent of Saint Bartholomew Exchange, Dr. Shepherd, enjoys that income. And in the Act of Parliament it was also provided, that Dr. Hollingworth, the incumbent of the parish (to which Saint Bartholomew Exchange has been united) should after Dr. Shepherd's death receive that endowment, so that the church is already built, but the endowment of 300*l.* a year will not be available till the death of Dr. Shepherd and Dr. Hollingworth. I am very anxious to get this church opened. If it were a chapel of ease I could provide for the duty, and appoint another curate for the parish. Could the parish do so legally, I think that they would not be unwilling to have that chapel as a chapel of ease, and to maintain it out of the church rates of the parish. The whole parish would be then kept together under one incumbent, there being one additional curate to serve the new church.

969. If that church were established as proposed, you would assign a distinct district to it?—I should employ a curate. I should consider it as part of my parish, and I should give him a certain space around it.

970. You would not give him a distinct charge of a district?—He would have a space of about 400 yards square, in which he would have to visit the poor around the church.

971. How long is this church likely to remain shut up?—I cannot tell. If the bishop consecrates it, the church is in the Lord Chancellor, but there is not a sixpence for the clergyman to receive until after the death of Dr. Hollingworth and Dr. Shepherd.

972. Are there pews to let?—There may be, but there are no people to take them and pay money for them.

973. Could it not be opened under a licence?—It could, and I would willingly provide the duty for it, but I cannot provide the expense of pew-openers and the expenses of a London church, which are very great; one cannot keep a London church clean as you would a country one. If it could have been made a chapel of ease to the parish, I think the parishioners could then take care of it in an economical way.

974. How long has this church been in this condition?—I suppose, if the consecration had been hurried, it might have been ready six months ago; since last autumn.

Rev. Edward Blick.

The Reverend EDWARD BLICK examined.

975. You are rector of Rotherithe?—I am.

976. Your population is 14,000?—I presume it is; it was 13,917 in 1841.

977. The area of your parish is rather more than a mile square?—A little more than a mile square in one part.

978. What is the total number of churches, chapels, and other places of worship?—There is the mother church and three new churches, and I hope there will be another little chapel this summer.

979. Those three churches you have raised during your own incumbency?—Yes.

980. There are four churches, are there not?—Yes, including the mother church.

981. Each accommodating about 1,000 persons?—Yes; as to the mother church, though it holds a thousand, yet it is in pews that are sometimes only four feet wide, and therefore, though when you calculate it you call it a thousand, there are never a thousand there. A double pew ought to be five feet wide.

982. And the free seats in the mother church are thirty-four, besides children's seats?—Yes.

983. In each of the other churches you provide accommodation for about 1,000, do you not?—Yes.

984. What sum of money have you spent, in round numbers, since you have been in the parish, in building churches and schools?—The churches, I should say, have cost 4,000*l.* each. In the statements I have published, I have shown that I took in the endowments, which

which I valued at so much per cent. I have charged my living with 205*l.* a year rent-charge; then I value that at so much capital.

985. What sum of money have you collected and laid out in church extension within the last ten or twelve years?—In round numbers, 30,000*l.*, including schools.

986. You have not been able thoroughly to divide, your parish into four districts?—Yes, we have divided the parish into four districts; and my curate has offered me 500*l.* if I will build a chapel this summer.

987. As to those clergymen that you have constituted, you have not been able to assign to them absolutely independent parishes?—They are so far independent that they have sole and exclusive jurisdiction within their districts.

988. Spiritual jurisdiction?—Yes.

989. How have you dealt with the matters of fees and church rates? The living being sufficiently large, I availed myself of the powers which were granted, and gave the ministers of the new churches from the beginning all the fees that were taken at their own churches.

990. There are no double fees within your parish?—No. I dislike the whole system, and I think it ought not to be endured, except where the poverty of the church requires it.

991. Has the question of church rates ever come before you?—We have one church rate, and at present that has been applied to the mother church only. I have obtained a local Act of Parliament, by which certain burial ground fees have been appropriated to the four churches.

992. Have you attempted to give them each power, and to exercise it, for raising church rates for themselves?—No, I should think that inexpedient. I hold it to be very inexpedient to attempt, in a densely populated neighbourhood, to make a rate for a portion of it.

993. But supposing you divided off a corner of that parish, and said, "Raise your own rates?"—Yes; but you are encompassed with excessive difficulties, the moment you attempt to make a rate for a portion of a densely populated neighbourhood. Perhaps the masses of the rich live in one place and the masses of the poor in another; for instance, in our parish, the Commercial Dock Company, which pays nearly one fifth of the whole rating, is in one particular district. Anybody who attends to the details of making a fair assessment for a rate, will soon see, if he goes into the details, that it is almost impossible for him to make a fair rating for a portion of a parish. In one street the inhabitants are all rich, and in another street they are all poor. There are difficulties about church rates; but I do not scruple to say, that I think every difficulty might be got rid of by one single enactment, that is to say, if Parliament would pass a law by which, when a parish had agreed to a church rate, there should be no difficulty in collecting it, any more than in collecting the poor rate; no reference to an ecclesiastical court.

994. You have stated that you contemplate adding another place of worship in connexion with the Established Church?—Yes.

995. In what way?—As a chapel of ease. Upon the general question of subdivision I may state that I would divide and subdivide parishes, until each clergyman had only a manageable population under his care, or under the care of himself and his curate or curates; but 3,000 is the utmost number that I would allow in one division. Any plan of division is better, in my judgment, than allowing the people to remain without a shepherd; but people are not to be transferred from one shepherd to another like a flock of sheep. When this is attempted to be forced upon people, you act like an unwise tradesman, who reckons his gains without his losses. The perfection of the system, so far as I at present see my way, would be to divide a populous parish into as many districts as should leave 3,000 to each clergyman and his curate; for I hold it to be impossible for one man to shepherd more than 1,000 people. But I think one man and his curate might shepherd 3,000 souls, provided he had his own church to hold 1,000 persons, and his boys', girls', and infant schools. The powers at present in existence appear to me sufficient to meet every case of division; with this exception, that I think there ought to be a discretionary power lodged in some competent hands to determine when and to what extent the rector or incumbent of the whole parish should be excluded from visiting, &c. persons in the new districts. When a new district is created, embracing a hamlet at a distance from the mother church, I would exclude the rector, and avail myself of the powers in existence for the raising of a separate church rate. But any one who knows the difficulty of making a fair assessment on property, even for the poor rate, will very quickly see, if he will go into the details of the question, that to make a separate rating for a portion of a densely populated neighbourhood is a work encompassed with almost insuperable difficulties. When, therefore, districts are created in such neighbourhoods, I would give the minister of the district uncontrolled power within his district. But the rector should, in my judgment, have a co-extensive right of visiting, and right of appeal to the bishop, who should have certain powers over the incumbent of the district, if he and the rector disagreed. To illustrate my position I take my own parish. At my request three districts have been created. In order to procure incomes for the incumbents, I have solicited endowments, which I knew could not be granted without giving to the incumbents sole and exclusive jurisdiction within their districts. Sooner than leave the people without a minister and a church, I would do the same again. But now come the evils which I wish to represent to the Commissioners. At present the ministers of the three churches can visit any one in

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their three districts. My pews are half taken up by persons living in other districts, and I have no right as a clergyman to call upon them; as an English gentleman I may go, but as a clergyman I cannot call upon them. The churchwardens are elected by the parish at large, including the three districts, and they can do just what they please with me and my church, so far as the powers of a vestry are concerned.

996. It would appear that the difficulty you experience is, that your congregation is partly drawn from the three other districts?—Yes; more than half.

997. Supposing your congregation were drawn simply from your own district, you would see no inconvenience in the system which now prevails?—Not at all, if you could make a separate rating, and prevent them coming to my church. If that could be done I would not object.

998. Will not that unfortunately always be the case, that at first, when a district is taken off, the persons who have been in the habit of frequenting the mother church will continue to do so; and may not time remove that difficulty, so that at last people will go to the church geographically nearest to them?—No; the three districts have the majority, and thus may be said to choose the churchwardens, and the churchwardens seat the parishioners.

999. What sort of vestry have you, a select vestry?—We have an open vestry.

1000. Only an open vestry?—Nothing but that.

1001. A great part of the inconvenience which you describe would appear to arise from the churchwardens of the mother church being elected by the whole parish, and not by the district immediately connected with the mother church?—Yes.

1002. Do you see any particular advantage in the rector having a co-extensive right of visitation over the whole parish, when he has once given up the exclusive ministrations of the Church to the ministers of the separate districts?—Am I to understand that the pews in the mother church are to be occupied by the people of the new districts?

1003. No, to be occupied by the people in the old; that the separation is complete?—If you make the separation complete, though I do not think it so good as the system of a rector with curates under him, yet I should be satisfied.

1004. You would think it better to have a rector with curates under him?—Yes. If I had had my will, I would not have had a curate removed at the rector's pleasure. I would have him as curate, as in case of a non-resident rector; he cannot be removed by the rector.

1005. What advantage would you expect to result?—Unity of action.

1006. What is the amount of control that you would suppose a rector in such a case to exercise over the curates of the respective churches?—That he should appeal to the bishop, stating that it was expedient that there should be a change, and leave the bishop, and not the rector, to be the judge.

1007. Would you leave to the stipendiary curates of these district chapels the exclusive right of visiting the poor within their districts?—I should like to see a discretionary power exercised, and not to apply the same rigid rule to all parishes, for I am satisfied it will not do. One parish would require one thing, and another another. In densely populated neighbourhoods I would rather keep them under one.

1008. What is the precise system that you would propose in your own parish? The system I should have preferred is this: I would have had all these ministers under the rector, and appointed by him, removable at the bishop's pleasure, though not at the rector's.

1009. What are the functions which you would assign to each of these curates?—Unlimited power within those districts, and no power of controlling them myself.

1010. If I understand you rightly with regard to pastoral visitation, you would make it obligatory on each district minister to visit all the poor in his district, but leave to the rector or the vicar of the original parish a right to visit any parishioner who requested his services?—Yes. In my parish I cannot visit persons who all their lives, and their fathers before them, have been to the mother church. Any one of the other clergymen can say, "What business have you here," if I visit a person in their districts.

1011. They are all appointed by you, are they not?—No; one of them is appointed by the trustees of Hyndman's Bounty.

1012. Then that which you regret, and which you would like to amend, appears to arise from this, that you have handed over a certain district with its church and nominally its people to a new minister, but you have not given him all the people, you have some of them yourself still?—Yes. They have the common law right to enter my church.

1013. They have a right to a seat in your church in consequence of paying rates to that church?—No. The paying the church rate does not give them any more right than a poor man.

1014. The inhabitants of the district have a general right of sitting in the mother church so long as they continue to pay, have they not?—I do not think their right arises from the payment of a church rate, but from residence in the parish.

1015. Independently of the question of church rates, the inhabitants of the districts within your parish still consider themselves, for some purposes, members of your parish?—Yes.

1016. And

1016. And that arises from the circumstance that these divisions and subdivisions of your parish are not completely parochialised?—Yes; and they never can be by the ecclesiastical law. The common law right will be the same. I shall always remain chairman of the vestry meetings.

1017. How are the pews assigned in your parish?—They are perfectly free; only that the custom is for the churchwardens to say, "You may sit there;" and the man takes a preference. In that sense they are appropriated.

1018. Do you see any mode by which it would be practicable to dispossess those who are already entitled to hold pews, on the plea of their living in other districts?—I am sure that would create the greatest confusion.

1019. Did you say that in the mother church you had no seat rents?—None at all.

1020. But in the new churches you have?—Yes, for pews.

1021. Did you not say, that in your opinion one clergyman could not very well look after more than 1,000 persons?—I do not think he can; I have tried the experiment.

1022. That would depend in a certain degree upon the nature of the population, would it not?—Yes.

1023. Whether more rich or more poor?—No, I think not.

1024. Or whether more Roman Catholic?—No, I think not. I think he is bound just as much to minister to them as to others.

1025. Would he be able to obtain the same access to them?—Yes, I think so, and he ought to go the more, I think.

1026. When you spoke of 1,000, did you mean 1,000 members of the Church?—Men, women, and children, I mean 1,000 population. Two hundred houses, with five persons in each house. I am bound to visit them, and if they are in error I am bound to go the oftener.

1027. Do not you take into account the question of territorial extent?—I think you can take a little more in a densely populated neighbourhood; but you have some drawbacks in towns. You have more civil work a good deal to do. I have to sign petitions in number twenty times greater in a town than in the country.

1028. In the 3,000 you have mentioned you included men, women, and children?—Yes.

1029. What proportion of those will be mere infants under five years of age?—I maintain that one fourth of the population, children from two to fourteen years of age, ought to be in the schools, and I believe it will be found eventually that that will be the case in London and elsewhere.

1030. You mentioned that your church would hold 1,000 and each of the other churches 1,000; can you state what the increase of real attendance has been in the parish?—Yes. When I went there first there were seven dissenting chapels, there are now three; there are at least four times the number of persons going to church; more than four times the number attending the sacrament of the Lord's Supper; and more than four times the number of children attending school.

1031. What is the number of children now attending the schools regularly, the number on the books, and the per-centage?—It is very much below what it ought to be. We have 1,200 on our books. This is the number that attended our annual meeting last year; the rule being, that none shall attend but those who are either good children or promise to be good children.

1032. Does that include infant schools?—Yes.

1033. Is not that as large a proportion as you could expect?—No; I think it is very much below what it ought to be, or what it would have been, if the clergymen in the districts had been my curates.

1034. You would say that in a population like yours you might expect one seventh of the population at school?—I shall be very much disappointed, if I live ten years longer, if I do not see more than that.

1035. In country districts it is not an unusual thing to have from one sixth to one seventh?—Yes; but it depends very much upon the locality.

1036. Your churches hold, you say, 1,000 each?—Yes.

	Pews.	Free.	Children.
Saint Mary's - - -	432	17	550
Trinity - - - -	351	377	275
Christchurch - - -	434	262	305
All Saint's - - - -	434	262	305
	1,651	918	1,435
			918
			1,651
			4,004

 1037. What

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1037. What population do you consider fairly that that accommodation would supply?—I speak here with some hesitation. My theory is 3,000 to each church, and in the country you might expect half the population at church, but not in town. I should not advise people to leave their houses so much in town, without some one at home. I think it is quite a mistake to build a church to hold more than 1,000; if you do, the population ought to be more than 3,000.

1038. Your theory would be, a church for every 3,000 people, and two clergymen attached to it?—Yes.

1039. You would prefer, that to a subdivision of parishes in some cases, having distinct parishes to that extent?—Yes; in dense neighbourhoods you would act better with one head.

1040. The amount of separation that you would give to the districts belonging to those district churches would be, that they should be separate for all spiritual purposes, but enjoying the advantages of a common rating for their support, and of common superintendence from the rector of the mother church?—Only to a certain limit, not to interfere with the clergyman's plans. I think that would spoil the efficiency of the arrangement.

1041. The limit of his superintendence should be the power of procuring the removal of one of those curates, upon good ground being shown by him to the bishop, as to the desirableness of his removal?—Yes. I would not let him be the judge of it. I think there should be an appeal to the bishop.

1042. Would you attach a school to each 3,000 people?—Yes.

1043. A separate school?—Yes; one for boys, and one for girls, and one for infants.

1044. And, as far as possible, you would have the congregation attending the church to arise from the district to which the church was attached?—Yes, I should prefer that; but you must proceed very tenderly with regard to that.

1045. You would rather prefer that the minister who has preached to the congregation should have the right to visit the sick among the same number?—Yes, I may say that. And I may add again I so dislike the system of double fees, that I think they ought never to be endured, except when the poverty of the mother church renders it necessary. In Bermondsey, there is a clergyman who has nothing but his fees and Easter offerings. I beg to say that I think the Ecclesiastical Commissioners did not act very wisely in not devising some plan by which he should retain his fees, or have some compensation if they took away any portion of his fees and Easter offerings. The case was different at Rotherhithe; and I have been able not only to give the clergyman the fees in their districts, but also every fee they could take at their church, leaving to myself any fees that came to my church. Then you see the people do as they like. And the fees at the district churches are beginning to be very considerable, and, strange to say, mine have not very much diminished at present; and I believe it is the parochial division that has worked the thing up.

1046. How do the Easter offerings stand in your parish?—I followed the same rule with regard to the Easter offerings. I have given to the ministers of the new districts one fourth of all the Easter offerings of the parish; but I reserved to myself the power of collecting. I myself appoint the churchwardens with their friends to go round and collect the whole.

1047. Do not you think you would raise more money if each clergyman collected from his own congregation?—No; it would not be from his own congregation; for as long as you retain the law that the churchwardens shall appropriate the sittings, they can appropriate them to any one, and that is a point of difficulty.

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1048. You spoke of the increased attendance at church of the parishioners; have you any system of pastoral visitation?—Yes, we have. I have been assisted from time to time by the Pastoral Aid Society and by the Scripture Readers Society, and I think that has assisted greatly. During the last year and half I have had two curates; they have been abundantly laborious in visiting from house to house, and that has increased the attendance at the churches.

1049. Are cottage lectures given?—We have not tried that with any success. I have no doubt that they are very valuable. Our cottages have principally very small rooms. We have had two services during the last year and a half in a new school room, and that will lead to the building of a church, I have no doubt.

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The Reverend Joseph Brown examined.

1050. You are the incumbent of the district of St. Matthias, Bethnal Green?—Yes.

1051. What is the amount of your population?—10,000 at least.

1052. What is the proportion of poor amongst them?—They are almost entirely of the working classes; there are very few shopkeepers compared with the number of poor.

1053. Have you been able to make yourself personally acquainted with your parishioners; or what assistance have you?—At present I have two curates. I should be afraid to say that I know all my people, but I think they all know me, or something about me

1054. What number do you imagine that a clergyman can know personally and be known by?—That is a very difficult question. Some men can manage more than others. Some from the

the first have had larger parishes than some others have had. I do not know, but I fancy there would be no difficulty in managing 3,000, or even more. I should not hesitate at twice that number.

1055. You think that one clergyman can manage well 3,000?—Yes, if he gives his time; and I suppose that he gives his whole time to his work: not that he takes pupils, or has any other secular employment. I think I should have no difficulty in managing 3,000. I do not suppose the aid of a curate in managing a parish of this number.

1056. Do you mean that two together could manage 3,000?—No, one. I think I could manage 3,000 alone without difficulty. I have always had good health, but men's health differs so much, and so many other things may occur, that it is difficult to give an opinion as to others. I suppose a man devoted to his work, when I state my opinion that 3,000 could be managed without difficulty.

1057. You suppose then, if a clergyman in early life has a large parish it will be easier for him to address himself at all future time to the wants and necessities of a populous parish?—Yes. If he settle down to 200, or 400, or 600 only at first, that makes a difference.

1058. You think that occupation in early life with a smaller number rather disqualifies a man for dealing in mature life with a larger population?—Yes, decidedly so. I feel thankful that very shortly after I was in priest's orders I went to a large population.

1059. How have you become acquainted with your own population; what means have you employed to make yourself acquainted with them?—Many and various. I think that there is no part, no court or place, but what I frequently visit, and therefore I am known to the people, and they most of them are known to me. I have, among other plans, a monthly meeting, to which they all are invited, at eight o'clock; all who like come. Then I have a provident or savings fund, consisting of a vast number; above 2,000 have already this year saved something. I attend to that myself every Monday evening from five to eight, as well as my two excellent curates, my son, and my scripture reader; there they see me, and tell me whatever they want to say. I have also a quarterly meeting of my communicants, at which we have tea together; and another of the Sunday school teachers; and one of young women only from fifteen to thirty years of age, and a similar meeting of lads. I have a young women's school of more than 100; it is twice a week, in the evening from eight to ten o'clock.

1060. Are you personally present at all those meetings?—Yes, at all the quarterly and monthly meetings, and the weekly savings fund; it is a very unusual thing if I am not there. I am also frequently at the evening schools.

1061. Is there any district visiting society?—I have none that can devote much time to societies, hence I have district visitors rather than a society. So, though I have forty-two Sunday school teachers, every one of them works with his or her own fingers. One of my churchwardens is a weaver, who works at his loom, or, more properly speaking, sets the work on for others. I meet my people very often. I have also a loan fund; I lend small sums, chiefly ten shillings, to be paid back sixpence a week; this has been very useful. I have lent to about 800. It is paid back with great honesty; some have not—very few.

1062. Do you assign districts to your two curates, or do you act contemporaneously over the whole surface?—I find it better for them to visit the whole parish. When I had two curates, at my first coming to Bethnal Green, I found that they confined themselves too much to that part only of the parish I had assigned them. After that I had one curate for two years; now I have two, and I prefer their taking the whole parish just wherever they please, or as I may suggest from time to time. I generally write down the name and address of cases requiring more particular attention; this is suspended in the vestry, where my curates can at all times see it.

1063. Have you the assistance of a scripture reader?—Yes; he goes through the whole parish. I tell him which streets; and if he confines himself too much to one, I send him away to various parts of the parish.

1064. Do you direct the attention of the curates to particular districts?—I direct their attention to particular streets, at times, as perhaps I am better acquainted with their state. At this present moment I have one awful place, one court containing about twenty houses, which has dropped down to its present state within the last six months, having been let to a very inferior class, and it will give me some trouble to get rid of their ways, or, rather, to effect by God's help some change in their habits. In such a case I direct not only my own attention but that of my friends my curates to that particular court.

1065. Do you or your curates visit without being sent for?—Yes, always; we never wait being sent for. They are in the parish at least four or six hours a day, and so am I often eight hours, and on Sunday the whole day. Our difficulty is to get through the streets without visiting, as all want a call or a word, or have something to ask or to tell about the body or soul. There is a very great deal of night work for us,—night school, evening meetings; the people cannot attend till eight, and it is often eleven by the church clock as I pass on my way home.

1066. You have not access to the people very often, except in the evening, have you?—Many of mine are weavers, and are at home all day; but many work wherever they can earn a shilling,—at the docks, or elsewhere. Many sell in the street, or travel about; hence many men are not home till night. I find, on looking over the baptismal register, that one

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half baptized at my church are the children of weavers, so that I may infer that at least one half of my parishioners are weavers, probably much more than half. They are badly paid. I have found my monthly meeting most useful in making myself known, and it has brought many to church. At eight o'clock we meet, and those who please, come; it is not confined to those who come to church, it is open to all the parish. I read to them; there is a religious tone throughout. I am a sort of walking newspaper for them during the month, and thus, when we meet, I tell them what has gone on in the world since we last met, adding practical remarks, moral and religious; then I go on to more direct religious subjects, such as missionary accounts; and, after my curates, or any clerical friend has addressed them, should they feel inclined to do so, finally end with singing and prayer. I commence always with singing, prayer, and reading the Scriptures. I have also a quarterly meeting of *working men only*. The object is to bring them together under my eye, and to know them, and that they may know me, and to hear any statement they may wish to make touching the state of trade or sanitary questions, or to talk over plans for the benefit of the working classes, such as emigration, the cultivation of waste lands, or Mr. Morgan's self-supporting village plan, which is very popular with them. Many of the chartists have attended, and take part in the conversations. Some of the working men speak very much to the purpose and very well; before we separate they are good enough to partake of a cup or two of coffee and a biscuit with me, which I have ready by the time we part, generally about half-past ten. The new year quarter they joined me in roast beef and porter, instead of coffee and biscuit.

1067. What attendance do you get at church?—At night it is generally full from September to May; the summer months not so full. There are sittings for 1,300. In the winter I have the privilege of seeing a vast number of young thieves in the church, but they are never turned out so long as they behave orderly. Now they go out to the Victoria Park, and other places. Next Sunday night it will not be so full, nor during the fine Sundays; about September it was full, and continued full till about a fortnight ago. They are open seats, hence they sit close together. If there were pews, the church would appear very full; you would call it a large congregation. There are 1,303 sittings, all free.

1068. What services have you in your church?—Three services; there is full service in the morning and evening, and in the afternoon I catechize the children, after the second lesson. The afternoon service is more for children; the baptisms and churchings are chiefly then. In the afternoon there is a service also in one of my schools, and a Thursday service in the evening as well as at the church.

1069. You have a school, have you not?—Several; national, infant, Sunday, night, and free or ragged schools.

1070. What number of scholars are there?—The last time that I had them together, I had 1,000. There are four day schools in my parish, and three of these work double; I mean, have a night school attached. I brought them together the 23d of this month, and I found 162 under six years of age. We are subject to a moving population. I think in one of those schools, opened about four years ago, the average attendance of which is about 160, there must have been upwards of 1,200 children in the course of that time. I find the night schools very useful, especially for those who go to work.

1071. Do you find any disorders arise from the night schools?—No. Where there are boys and girls, it is better to send the boys home ten minutes before the girls. If you send the girls first they are pretty sure to stop back for the boys; if they remain after the boys then the master can go with the girls as far as he thinks necessary. I have not any new schools built yet, but hire rooms or buildings just as I can find them. It is a great expense and inconvenience to me not having my new schools.

1072. Those are old school places, are they not?—One is an old French Protestant chapel in Saint John Street, Brick Lane, in which I preached (licensed by the bishop) before the church was consecrated; another is in a wood yard, up-stairs, once used as a cabinet-maker's workshop; anything that I can get. For one I give 18*l.* a year, for another 14*l.* another 10*l.*, another 7*l.* I have an evening school for young women *above sixteen years* of age; it is a great comfort to them as well as advantage. It is on Monday and Tuesday only. *Above* one hundred now belong to it. Many of them rush from their work to the school without going home. They come in from the city and other parts. It would surprise the Commissioners to hear the various and often disagreeable employments of many of these young women. They come in with pleasure from work to the school; they learn to read and write.

1073. You find no disorders arising from those night schools?—No. I have another school for boys and girls *above sixteen*. I have 130 in it who would have no week-day education if they did not come; they come from their work there. With us they go to work so very young, we cannot keep them in our national schools.

1074. Do you find any disorders arising from the mixed character of your evening congregations?—No. The only thing that we found for a long time was the positive annoyance of disorderly characters. I have now always a policeman in church during the evening service. The first year, every Monday morning, during the fruit season, the sexton swept away quite, I should think, a bushel of orange peel, dust, and chestnut and nut shells. We have got it down to about a hatful. I did not like to turn them out; they were much to be pitied.

pitied. I allude to the young men and lads. In crowded populations everything is against the poor man's child; I mean as to personal comfort, morals, and religion. They favoured us sometimes with a cracker thrown into the fire at the conclusion of service.

1075. You think it is better to put up with a little disorder than to exclude them from the church?—Certainly; as disorder is chiefly annoying to the minister, I never allow them to turn any one out except it is really necessary for example's sake. I was very much blamed, I know, by some for allowing them to remain, but I feel I did right.

1076. And the consequence is that you do find order making progress?—Yes; perfect order during service. Until the commencement there is rather a large amount of noise by talking up to the time, and immediately service is over. I speak of the evening; in the morning the congregation is what is called a good morning congregation. With me it is, I should say, in the morning about half the number, or perhaps two thirds, of the evening congregation. It is a good congregation in the morning with us, as the poor do not get out in the morning. Then we have been subject to Sunday trading so much. I have often on Sunday patrolled Brick Lane before morning service. I could not drive the sellers out, but I could the buyers, who knew me; they were ashamed to be seen. I have talked to them on such occasions, not about buying so much as their being late for church if they did not make haste, and such like. Hence many were afraid to go there, because they would see me, and now buy on Saturday. The Brick Lane selling and buying has gone down very much. The police were very active on my first application to the Commissioners. They sent down a body of police to clear away the large barrows which lined the street; they were all cleared away a few weeks after I went. I am greatly indebted to the activity and attention of the police at all times. The shops we cannot close, because of the difficulty of conviction; but several shops have been closed, and the buying has gone down very much. It is not to be compared with its former state, and is wonderfully improved certainly. It is quite agreeable to go through my parish after one o'clock. At eleven they begin to close and to sweep up, and if they do sell after eleven it is the exception. But we were subject to china selling and linen drapery, and oil shops and corn-dealers, and coal-sheds, and penny papers, and beggars, —not merely selling food after that time. Now it is only till eleven or church time, which is bad enough. But we are most troubled with bodies of ten or twelve young men gambling under the arches of the railway and other retired spots. We have nothing else to complain of after morning service, and the parish is quite quiet the rest of the Sunday.

1077. Are any of your schools in the arches of the railway?—No. One is immediately opposite the arches of the Eastern Counties Railway.

1078. You have not used any of the arches?—No, except for large tea parties. I have had parties of 700, 1,400, and on one occasion 2,000 of my parishioners, young and old.

1079. You are not aware that the arches were applied for and refused?—I apprehend that it was so; the directors have turned them to better account for themselves. They are let for stables and coal depôts; and so get more rent than I would give.

1080. You spoke of Sunday trading as being a great inconvenience; are you aware that many shopkeepers have expressed a desire to close their shops if others were compelled to do so?—Yes. I sent a petition to parliament a few days since, signed by sixty of my tradesmen, for closing the shops on Sunday; many of these keep open, but would rather not. The truth is, Jews, who care not for our Sabbath, or somebody who cares for no Sabbath at all, comes and opens on a Sunday, and thus the tradesman near him says, in self-defence, that he must do so too. A very bad excuse nevertheless. I think the night schools, my friendly meetings, and various other meetings which bring the people together, and the provident fund, have been of vast use; not the least that they brought me to know my people, and them to know me, and thus many have been brought to church.

1081. Have you been able to raise funds for any parochial purposes in your district?—No. My schools cost close upon 300*l.* a year. I get two guineas a year from the parish, and great assistance from Messrs. Hanbury and Buxton; whatever else I get is not from the parish. If I have a charity sermon, and the church is full in the evening, I think it very well if I get 25*s.*

1082. Mostly in copper, is it not?—Yes. My people are nearly all poor; hence, from the communicants, when the Lord's supper is administered, the collection is about 10*s.* from 100 communicants, or the average of 1*d.* each. I could mention instances in which they get up in the morning to work two hours earlier, in order to be able to come to my Thursday evening service. I have a home for twelve aged Christian women; it consists of two small furnished houses, in which they live rent free; this is a great comfort to them.

1083. Where do the funds come from?—From a few distinguished friends to whom I have the honour and good fortune to be known. They often send me money without asking. I have been greatly helped by R. Hanbury, Esq., the Bishop of London, Mrs. R. Ware, the Earl of Effingham, Mr. Henry Kingscote, Mr. W. Cotton, and others I could mention, in getting support for my charities.

1084. You can get little or no support from within that district for parochial purposes of any kind?—I do not think of it for a moment. I spend all I have, and then seek help out of the parish. Betton's Charity gives me 5*l.* yearly; the Bethnal Green Churches Fund makes

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me a grant; and for this year the London Diocesan Board of Education granted me 50*l.* For the sick and destitute poor I receive great assistance from the Metropolitan Relief Association. The Scripture Readers Association require only 5*l.* from me towards my scripture reader's stipend. The Curates Aid Society grants me 80*l.* for one curate, and a friend gives me this year 100*l.* for a second curate, Mr. Charles J. Bevan. Another thing I do every year: I take my people out, if I can, in the summer on a trip by the railway, and that makes one known very much. Where many were opposed to the church, and they knew not why, as I found in my parish five years ago, it was necessary to do things that are not necessary in other parishes not so situated. There are some posts of duty where it is necessary to become all things to all men in order to win some. Last year I took 1,025 by the train down to Epping Forest. Mr. W. Cotton was good enough to send a cart for our provisions, and carry some old folks who could not walk. I have the good fortune to know many at the west end of London, and thus think I may have some advantages in point of funds; but I need not say all would not do if I had not something of my own besides what my church produces. At the consecration of my church I tried to get my people to help towards the first year's expenses. I told them if they would work or make things,—for they have a great deal of taste,—I would try and sell them, and so get some money towards the next year's expenses. They made 370 different articles. The Queen was so gracious as to allow them to come to Buckingham Palace. I got altogether nearly 150*l.* clear, which helped me on with the church and other expenses, in the year 1848. I am that 150*l.* short this year. I have also a soup kitchen after the admirable plan of M. Soyer, who erected it for me from some funds he had, with addition from some I had.

1085. Is that maintained from without?—Yes. I think the loss has been 10*s.* a week this winter, which is really nothing compared with the good effected. I consider this as almost self-supporting. I have another plan for school children's boots. About three or four years ago I told the parents if each child would bring one halfpenny a week, such child should have a pair of new boots at Christmas. Last year I think they had above 300 pairs of boots, all new at Christmas; they had paid one halfpenny a week, *i. e.* 2*s.* 2*d.*, and I paid 1*s.* 4*d.* a pair to that. The great point is to get our parochial charities to be self-supporting. This I am trying as to the shoe fund, therefore I told them this year, "You must pay a penny a month more." It was at a monthly meeting I told them; hence the use of my monthly meetings. I said, "You must now pay 1*s.* a pair more towards the boots. I may die or be removed, and it does not follow that everybody would be able to give this 1*s.* 4*d.* a pair. You must therefore give a penny a month more, and that will reduce what I pay to 4*d.* a pair. This they are now doing, so that instead of 300 one-and-fourpences it will be 300 four-pences I shall have to pay at Christmas.

1086. Then you do see the means progressing more and more of making the people contribute to their own objects of parochial charity?—Yes; and that is the great comfort of the parish; everything is happily so improving in that way. I am reducing the expenses year by year in every possible way; thus I have hitherto given at Christmas *one penny for every shilling* saved; this year I have told them I shall give only *one shilling in the pound;* this the Metropolitan Relief Association allows, so there will be no loss. And I have no doubt, with regard to the Aged Christians Home, if I told the old people, "You must pay 6*d.* a week," they would try to pay it, and thus the loss would be only 2*s.* weekly; it *now* costs me 8*s.* every week.

1087. For the schools you must look entirely to subscriptions?— Yes. Not having my own schools built at present, I am obliged to pay a great deal for rent. I pay, as already said, for one 18*l.* a year, for another 3*s.* 9*d.* a week, for another 14*l.* a year rent. Then I have separate masters and mistresses, which adds to the expense. I have one free (or ragged) school; all the night schools are free; in the rest they pay only 1*d.* a week each.

1088. Do you conceive that it is necessary to make these schools free?— I would rather they were not free. I did it in self-defence. Others started free or ragged schools near to mine. I started a ragged school four years ago (not free), and did my best to elevate the children, and Providence kindly blessed the work. That school is now paying a penny a week; and seventy children last year saved the halfpenny a week for boots. If you do not cure the cause of a ragged school it does not, I think, accomplish its object.

1089. If you leave the neighbourhood as ragged as you found it?—Exactly so; if you do you have not cured the population, you have not elevated them. Many of the ragged school children are not the poorest; they are the most vicious but not the most destitute; the contrary very often. My impression is that a ragged school properly conducted will destroy itself; that is, destroy the cause of its existence. The object is to reduce the necessity for such institutions, not to multiply and perpetuate them. There ought at once to be established for this class large industrial schools similar to the Norwood schools.

1090. About what has been the annual expenses of your church?—Last year the expenses were 40*l.* in round numbers. I give five guineas a year to the organist. Altogether I think the expenses were 40*l.*

1091. Including five guineas a year to the organist?—Yes. I have reduced the expenses to the lowest possible amount. Many of my people do things for nothing. They clean out the church every week for nothing at all. I give them permission to have a cup of tea in the vestry when they have done. I think I have twenty women who thus assist at various times

times in the church. It is a large church to clean, so much dirt gets into it. The poor are exceedingly ready to do anything, and unless compelled they would never take a farthing. The 40*l.* was out of my pocket. 3*l.* were collected after two sermons, and the Bishop of London, who heard of the deficiency, kindly enclosed me a cheque for ten guineas. But the church expenses is one of the great difficulties of those poor districts, not merely the schools. Want of means is felt on every side.

1092. You mean to pay for lights, organist, and clerk?—I have no clerk; but every expense I am accountable for; window breaking, lamp-glasses, &c.

1093. You would not be able to collect any church rate in your district?—I think I should be able to get it; and that I should have no difficulty, if the poor inhabitants had to pay it; but the owners of property pay the rate, which is no doubt charged by increased rent, and thus the owners of property, not the inhabitants, might possibly object to a rate. If, however, they had not to pay to the mother church they would pay willingly enough. I am very confident in the readiness of the working classes to pay towards the church expenses as far as they can, but they have it not to give. I do not think the average weekly earnings, the five years to 1849, have been ten shillings. Hundreds not that.

1094. From what you know with regard to what has been paid for the sites of those houses, are they very valuable, and do the owners let them for considerable sums?—They are very valuable to the owners, and the value of the houses has greatly improved. If I had the money, and wished to invest it in house property or building land, I would buy all that is to be sold in the parish of Bethnal Green. One large owner of houses told me that he never lost so little in his rents in any previous year in my parish as last year. The police speak of the great improvement of my parish; and I heard, as regards the police office in Worship Street, that of late years there never had been so few warrants or summonses as in the previous year.

1095. Hare Street is in your parish, is it not?—Yes.

1096. Was not it notorious for thieves?—Very notorious.

1097. Was there not a gang of thieves called the Hare Street gang?—Yes. Seven men, I have been told, were executed one morning at Newgate belonging to that gang, and two the next Monday. It was only yesterday that a gentlemen told me that he recollected seeing, not very many years since, the police go up the street armed with pistols and cutlasses, to prevent bull-baiting in Hare Street Fields. They used to bait the bull there, and they could only put it down by armed force. On one occasion I am told the military were called out; that was not in my time, of course. The last five years my church and various schools have been robbed about twenty-five different times.

1098. Do you think that your ecclesiastical status would be improved, and your influence thereby increased, were your parish made practically and legally a parish with all the rates of an ancient parish?—Yes; but my parish is a distinct parish; that is, except so far as the payment of rates is excepted. The great difficulty with me is literally the want of funds and a rate to fall back upon for expenses. There should be a *small school rate* in such cases. It would be popular with the working men, who would gladly pay it.

1099. Are all the districts in Bethnal Green in the same circumstances?—No; I think six are. Those not being distinct parishes I consider in a much more disagreeable position.

1100. Does your own experience lead you to say that those parishes which are placed in the same circumstances as your own have been able to work better, and that their status has become improved?—I should say that the parishes like my own work better than the others; and I can speak from experience of both kinds, the late Mr. Wilberforce having presented me to the church he built at Mill Hill, and for which, because there was no district assigned, I had the annoyance of a lawsuit five years and a half; for the lawsuit could not have been maintained had it been a distinct parish.

1101. Do you think that your ecclesiastical influence would be at all increased by your having a right to a higher title, such as a rector or vicar?—I think that human nature is such that the uneducated think more of a clergyman who is altogether as they call it a clergyman. There is no doubt that you raise the influence of a clergyman the moment it is understood he is not subordinate to the parish church; and so, I think, you raise the influence of the Church itself, to say nothing about the clergyman.

1102. Would you think that a parish circumstanced as Bethnal Green is, if broken up into eight, or ten, or twelve practically independent and real parishes, but owing a kind of moral respect to the centre of unity in the mother church, would be better worked than if they were entirely separate and distinct, and having no coherence whatever?—I am decidedly in favour of entire separation. As it is, we have slight difficulties.

1103. What I meant was, that allowing that each of those parishes shall be really and truly independent, so that there shall be no interference whatever with them by the incumbent of the mother church, is it your opinion if these were considered to have a moral reference to the incumbent of the old mother church as a centre of action, that such parishes would be better worked than if they were altogether separate, and having no coherence whatever?—I am quite decided upon that opinion, that perfect independence is the only way to work those large parishes. One has not time to think of the mother church or anything else, short of duty or courtesy, where the districts are so large

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1104. What I meant was this: Suppose that a parish were considered still to be tied together by old associations, and that the incumbent had a kind of moral influence with the clergy, who were so dismembered though really independent, so as to keep them together to act in concord, do you think that such a state of things would be desirable?—I think that if he were a wise and judicious man, he would be sure to have it; but if not, he would never acquire it.

1105. With respect to the associations in Bethnal Green, were they not all associations against the Church rather than from attachment to the parochial authorities?—The association of feeling appeared entirely against the Church.

1106. That was before the division was not it?—Yes.

1107. Were you not, when you went into the district, frequently subject to abuse as clergymen, whereas you are now received as friends?—It is usual for the ignorant and the friends of disorder everywhere to abuse the Church and the clergy; but I was never insulted in my own parish, though the feeling at the time was strongly against the Church; now, however, I think it is our faults if we are not received as friends. The Church labours under one great difficulty; the vestrymen and parochial governors are many of them, dissenters; and though gentlemen of great respectability, must necessarily be inclined not to favour or forward the influence of the clergy. The board of guardians, some three or four years since, it is said, desired the relieving officer not to attend to the cases of the poor brought before him by the clergy; about that time I had a very insolent note from the relieving officers to this effect; and I remember a similar statement being made to the magistrate at Worship Street, about the same time. The two churchwardens this year of the mother church, I believe, are dissenters. One of the vestrymen at this time is the minister of an independent congregation, and though not at all opposed to the Church, as the manner of some is, but is in every sense a Christian and a gentleman, and, I am thankful to say, resides in my parish, yet, as a conscientious dissenter, he must prefer the adoption of such parish arrangements as would further the interests of what is called the dissenting cause.

1108. What is their standing; do they exist by a separte Act of Parliament?—I suppose so; I am not sure of that.

Tuesday, 5th June 1849.

The EARL OF HARROWBY in the Chair.

R. B. Seeley, Esq.

5th June 1849.

ROBERT BENTON SEELEY, Esq., a member of the Commission, examined.

1109. You have had some experience in the management of London parishes, have you not?—I am acquainted with the management of some London parishes. I have lived in two or three different parishes during the last thirty or forty years.

1110. Have the parishes with which you have been most acquainted been large parishes or small parishes?—The parish in which I first began to take any notice of public matters was one of the City parishes, Saint Dunstan's in the West.

1111. What were the circumstances of that parish?—I may say that although I would not set up that parish as a model, still I should be very well contented if we could bring all the large parishes into the same form and condition.

1112. What was the population of that parish?—The population of that parish was about 3,400.

1113. What was the usual staff of the clergy in that parish?—I have known three incumbents there, and I never knew any one of them think of being without a curate.

1114. That does not appear to be too much?—No. There has generally been a scripture reader besides.

1115. What number of children attended the schools?—We had no difficulty in establishing everything of that description that we wanted, and we are always considering whether anything more could be added. We are now aiming to get up a middle school for boys. We have had for more than a century past, boys and girls schools; and more recently an infant school, and latterly a foundation or industrial school for girls.

1116. Your population is composed of mixed classes, is it not?—Yes, we have a few wealthy persons, a good many tradesmen, and a good proportion of the poor.

1117. Have you ever lived in a parish differently constituted?—I may state that the reason I was anxious to be examined was this: I have observed that the clergymen generally who have been examined before this commission have looked at the matter almost solely on the side of the religious question, and its bearing upon the spiritual interests of the poor; but, as I have had occasion to observe, there are many other things which, though far inferior in importance, are still worth thinking of; that is to say, the social working of the parochial system. I have been accustomed to see in the parish of which I have been speaking the clergyman always at the head of everything that was good and of everything desirable

rable that was going on. It is a parish self governed; and I think, if the great parishes were divided into communities of 3,000 or 4,000, they might all be easily self governed. That is to say, whenever you had any public business, you would call all the people together, and in a parish of that sort you would never find anything unpleasant. You never dream, for instance, in a parish of that size, of such a thing as a clergyman being insulted at such a meeting. As a matter of course he takes the chair, and is looked upon as the person whom it is proper first to consult on all questions.

1118. You conceive that the social organization of a small parish is very different from that of a large one?—Yes. In a parish of moderate limits there would usually be a given number of persons nominated as a Select Vestry; that is popularly nominated, at a public meeting, in a way that would be satisfactory to every body, taken from all shades of opinion, out of the middle and higher classes of the parish. Such would be the usual mode of proceeding. After some years acquaintance with St. Dunstan's, I went to reside where I do now, in a parish a little more towards the outskirts of the metropolis, and I have once there attended a parish meeting. That was a parish containing 20,000 or 30,000 people; and for the first time I saw a riot, a mob meeting in a parish vestry. I found that the clergyman had been driven away by repeated insults. They upset chairs and tables, and struck each other, and I believe that such is the state of things that naturally prevails; wherever you attempt to maintain self-government in a very large parish you have a mob directly. Next, I have observed,—to carry on the same view of the matter as to the government of a parish,—that these disorders naturally led, for instance, in St. Pancras parish, many years ago, to the close vestry system. That parish was governed, as many large parishes were governed for many years, by close vestries; that is to say, by vestries nominated without the people being at all consulted, and constantly perpetuating themselves. Such was the system in many of the parishes of the metropolis for many years; but, from its closeness, it became exceedingly unpopular, and people detested it. They never knew what was going on inside these vestries. They were governed and taxed without being consulted at all, and they perpetually made a clamour about it. Then that led to a fourth change, or, I should say, a fourth stage, and the last. Sir John Hobhouse's Act was passed about the year 1832. That would have been a very good bill if there had been the principle of subdivision in it; but the large parishes were all empowered to elect vestries of their own annually, and by what they call in America "the general ticket;" that is, every elector voted for the whole vestry; and when you apply that way of voting to such a parish as St. Pancras, which touches the back of my house in Ormond Street, and extends up to Highgate Church, it is plain that people cannot know what they are about, and cannot select persons whom they know. This mass of persons, 60 or 100, composing the vestry, cannot be known to the people who vote for them, and hence the election is managed necessarily by public house clubs. Thus we have vestries elected of whom I think the middle classes and the higher classes know nothing; they do not know who they are, or how they came to be there. Of these four ways of managing a parish, I should say the first is at the same time the most popular and the freeest; it is the old English system; it is the best and the most comfortable, and indeed the only comfortable way. Then it bears largely upon the moral and religious interests of the parish in this way. We had the rector of a large parish here the other day, who appeared to be tolerably well content with the state of things now existing in his parish. He said that with four curates he could do, he thought, every thing that needed to be done; but then he dropped afterwards the admission, which I think is all important, that all the little tradesmen in his parish were dissenters. Now the fact I take to be this, that in the case of a great rectory of that sort the rector's time is occupied, as has been already observed, in the general management of his parish. He mixes with the higher classes, the wealthy people, and he can attend them when they are ill, and can get money from them whenever he wants it. His four curates go among the poor, that is to say, among those really in distress or in sickness, and as he knows that all the poor can be so looked after, for he has got all their names down in books, and knows well by reports their circumstances and what they are receiving, he feels tolerably content, and says to himself, "I am doing my duty in the parish." But meanwhile the great mass of the people lying between the rich and the poor are wholly left out of view, and are, I will not say, forgotten, but at all events the rector scarcely ever comes in contact with them. He deals with the rich, and his four curates have entire occupation among the sick and the poor; but the middle classes of the people see neither the one nor the other; and as they do not see them, and never have any intercourse with them, they neither attend the church nor send for the clergymen when they are sick, and, as the rector himself said, "they are dissenters." I believe that this view of it might be generalized with regard to almost all large parishes. It is for the Commissioners to consider how far this is a wholesome state of things. I presume that all sitting at this table are inclined to do everything that is possible to strengthen, improve, and maintain the Church. But then this state of things, I think, allows to exist, if it does not create, vast masses of persons, and who really are a very important class in the community, and who are, many of them, very much disposed to take down the Church, and destroy it as an establishment. This, then, was the chief matter that I wished to bring under the notice of the Commissioners; namely, the social view of the question, illustrated by the experience of a small parish, in which, as I said before, the people can govern themselves, always having their rector at the head of all their proceedings. There is in such a parish an entirely friendly feeling existing

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ing among all classes. The rector is on perfectly good terms with everybody in the parish, and he is known to them all. Then they are brought by public business into the vestry, as it is called; that is to say, into a part of the church, to transact the affairs of the parish. I do not mean to say that this brings them to church, but it makes them at home there. I do not mean that this alone is of any great importance; but if you shut a man out you cannot expect to make a friend of him. In the great parishes, if a little tradesman goes to church he finds, either that the seats are too dear, or else that he must sit among the poor in the free seats, and thus you almost drive him to be a dissenter, and he is greeted by the dissenters in a friendly manner. As to the religious part of the subject, though I would rather leave that to the clergy, the Commissioners have heard at this table so many opinions expressed in favour of management by one incumbent at the head of 20,000 or 30,000 people, that I cannot avoid observing, as I did once before in the way of a question, that I believe all writers of any estimation upon Church matters have held but one opinion upon this subject. A little book which I happen to have here was written by Mr. Wilberforce, the brother of the Bishop of Oxford. As to Dr. Chalmers's opinion, everybody knows what that was; he laid it down that a clergyman could not look after more than 2,000 persons; and the Reverend Mr. Blick, who was examined the other day, stated, that if you would give a man the spiritual charge of a number of persons for whom he was to be accountable, 2,000 was about the right limit. Mr. Wilberforce, in writing on the parochial system, says, "Let "it be established as a principle, that the population of no parish should exceed some "definite amount, perhaps 3,000; and let us then ascertain how many churches must be "erected in each diocese before the towns shall be thus far provided." He adds a note to explain further. He says, "The proposed maximum may perhaps be thought too great, "especially when it is remembered that the old parishes contained on an average less than "650. It is certainly more liable to this than to the opposite charge; but it should be "remarked, that every such parish ought to have at least two resident ministers; and that in "proportion to the diminution of pluralities such a nursery for curates will be urgently "needed. Although, therefore, 3,000 souls are unquestionably too many for one pastor, "they may not, when concentrated in a town, be thought too many for one parish served by "two or more."

1119. Did not Mr. Blick speak of 3,000 for a clergyman and his curate?—Yes. Mr. Wilberforce adds, "Our new churches must of course be parochial; that is, they "should be churches for the especial benefit of their own districts."

1120. Do you recollect what the passage of curates was through the London parish you have been speaking of?—I think they seldom left except for promotion of some kind or other.

1121. How frequently did that occur; how long did they stay?—On the whole, perhaps, taking the average, about five years.

1122. Do you think you can ever make an impression upon the masses of the population in towns without out-door preaching?—I never met with any out-door preaching without immediately going to listen to it, but I regret to say that I never heard any out-door preaching worth listening to. If we could get out-door preaching worth listening to, I should be very glad of it.

1123. Have you ever considered the question in reference to the making of new districts, such as the districts which are now constituted, merely building a church, and leaving it entirely unendowed?—Yes.

1124. How would that effect the opinion which you have now expressed?—The point which I have chiefly pressed is that of the importance of creating communities of 2,000 or 3,000 persons, in which the clergyman should have his proper place. The only person who has alluded to such a community was the archdeacon who was examined on the last day of our meeting. He spoke of it as a reason why he shrank from breaking up his large parish. He stated that though he had been there but a few years he had got a community round him consisting of the better sort of the middle classes, and he shrank from breaking it up; but I think we must get over temporary feelings of that kind. I do not imagine that any change of this kind can take place without creating some uncomfortable feelings, and some inconveniences for a few years; but I think the Commissioners must consider what will be the case in twenty years hence, or, rather, permanently. The system as we have it, of leaving parishes under one government and merely planting them with new churches the minister of which was really hardly any duty to perform out of the pulpit and the sick room, is not the old parochial system, not at all like it, and has not that advantage which I have alluded to of making the clergyman the first person in the parish, the father of a large family, as it were, with whom he is perpetually mingled in a variety of affairs, not merely secular affairs, but the affairs of the community, and the management of a certain neighbourhood or locality.

1125. As to the difficulty of carrying out parochial plans; such as the institution of schools, and other things that are important in a district, where there is no endowment, and no means whatever, in a district not larger in size than is manageable, you say 3,000 for one person, say 4,000 for two clergymen; would that give scope for instituting schools, and carrying on societies, institutions, and other Church matters, maintaining the ministers on the system we have now?—I never should for a moment question this, that you must adapt any change that you are able to effect to existing circumstances. Nobody would dream of giving

Saint

Saint Pancras, for instance, I mean the mother church, a population of 3,000; nobody would dream of taking any church built to seat 2,000 or 2,500 persons, and giving it only a population of 3,000. I should go so far as to say, that I should allow the population to be four times the church-room; and whenever you have got a church to hold 1,000, I should say at once that the parish might contain 4,000; that is, when you have got the building. You must in dividing the original parish adapt the change to the circumstances.

1126. You would make all these distinct and separate communities compact social bodies for every purpose?—Yes.

1127. Which of course would involve the whole arrangements of the parish as a parish?—Yes.

1128. It is quite notorious, is it not, that in some places you would have a district altogether poor, and not containing a single respectable person; how would you manage in that case?—I do not know whether that is strictly the case, except in some very few instances indeed. I have not a case before me that I am acquainted with. I have heard of such cases; and I think the worst perhaps was that mentioned by Mr. Brown, in Bethnal Green.

1129. Would you not take the whole of Bethnal Green into your view?—I suppose that Bethnal Green should be treated like others, and be divided into a number of parishes.

1130. You do not contemplate dividing a parish into square sections; you do not object to having a very irregularly shaped parish so as to secure a mixture of classes?—Those cases of great poverty might amount to some dozens in the whole country, and they would be just the cases in which you must have a sufficient endowment, and I believe funds are to be found in the Church, especially if the attention of Parliament is directed to such cases. I believe funds may be found; and wherever you have a mass of poor in a district, and you wish to plant a clergyman there, he must be properly maintained; you must provide funds for his support, and for his church also.

1131. Do not you think that in many cases, if attention were fixed upon spots of that kind, only wanting certain endowments to complete them, that you would find benevolent persons progressively making those endowments?—Yes, I am sure of that. I need only allude to what Mr. Cotton has done in Bethnal Green. While on this part of the subject I should like to refer to what was stated by the rector of St. James's, and the difficulty that he seemed to apprehend in consequence of some parts of his parish containing the wealth, and other parts filled with poverty; and, judging from passing through that neighbourhood, I should say that what he, the rector of St. James's, would call poor would be very wealthy people if found in Bethnal Green. The rector said, "If you divide my parish into five or six "new parishes, some of them will be so poor that they will not be able to support them-"selves." Now I say without any hesitation, that if any commission were to set to work vigorously and divide that parish, and call upon the wealthy parts of it to do their duty towards the poorer districts, and at once to provide all that was necessary, there would be no difficulty in raising 30,000*l.*, 40,000*l.*, or even 50,000*l.*, in the space of a year or two. All that is wanting in St. James's is to build two new churches, and to endow one of them, and also to endow Berwick Street Church. Now 50,000*l.* would do all this very well. Thus I should reckon St. James's rather as an instance in favour of subdivision than as an instance of difficulty.

1132. To look at the difficulties of the question, as you have given your attention to it, how would you propose, in any of those poor districts, in planting a church for 4,000 people, to arrange the church accommodation, in the first place, and in the next provide the church expenses. The district may be a poor district, or it may be a very respectable district; but a few years may altogether change its character, as is often the case. Would you have the accommodation attached to houses, or appropriated to individuals, or the sittings let?—This is a mere matter of taste and expediency, varying in different parts. I should say that if I built a church in a poor district, a district in which the poor very much predominated, I should like to avoid galleries, and give all the accommodation upon the floor. I should build it with transepts; having a few appropriated seats in the transepts; leaving the whole of the nave for the common use, and having it comfortably fitted up for the inhabitants of the districts; leaving some seats in the transepts for those few who might be willing to subscribe to the expenses of the church, or take seats.

1133. You spoke of the great importance of the social working of well-organized parishes; how do you conceive you would be able to get over the difficulty of having one set of vestrymen chosen to represent 150,000 people?—That I should look to be gradually reformed. I have already stated that I have seen four different systems of working a parish, and I conceive the old English one to be the best and the most popular one, and one which the people cannot find any fault with, and the only one we ought to be content with. I think all the new inventions inferior, whether it be a great parish meeting in a mob, or a great parish managed by a close vestry, or under Sir John Hobhouse's Act; that they are all, beyond any comparison, worse than the old system, and inferior, and faulty in every sort of way. If you will divide a community into bodies of 3,000 or 4,000 persons, you may then call the householders together safely, and never meet perhaps above 100, and you will be able to talk matters over in a rational way, and the clergyman will be sure to find his place among them, and you will restore, I think, the Church feeling and the old English way of managing a parish in those great places where at present it is quite lost, and I consider the loss to be a great national danger.

R. B. Seeley, Esq.
5th June 1849.

1134. Do not you think that in a large parish where there is but one place for voting, and that at a great distance from other parts of the parish, that a large part of the population would be practically excluded from the exercise of their rights in the management of the parish by the difficulties thrown in the way of their voting?—Yes; I think that no way can be found of governing or managing a large parish in a way consistent with justice or common sense; I mean a large parish remaining undivided. Subdivision of parishes I believe to be the great external means.

Tuesday 12*th June* 1849.

The BISHOP OF LONDON in the Chair.

Bishop of Ripon.
12th June 1849.

The BISHOP OF RIPON examined.

1135. YOUR lordship has had opportunities in your administration of the diocese of Ripon of coming into contact with large parishes to a considerable extent?—I have.

1136. And of observing the effect of the administration of large parishes when subdivided, or when left concentrated in the hands of a single individual?—I may say that the only opportunity I have had of judging of a parish divided into separate and independent parishes, is in the case of the division of the parish of Leeds, which is now going on. There are other great parishes in my diocese still undivided, strictly and legally speaking.

1137. Undivided to the full extent?—Yes. A great number are so far divided as to have churches with incumbents to them.

1138. Forming ecclesiastical districts?—Yes; ecclesiastical districts legally assigned.

1139. So that for spiritual purposes they are independent in their action of the clergyman of the mother church?—That is a very difficult question. We all know that the ecclesiastical law and the Church Building Acts are attended with so much difficulty in ascertaining their exact bearing, that I cannot say that they are exactly spiritually independent; there is still some degree of spiritual superiority claimed; but I think that practically they are independent, though there is a certain spiritual superiority claimed in many instances.

1140. Is it your lordship's opinion, from your observation, that it is better that the district should be more or less dependent upon the clergyman of the mother church?—I think the clergy act with more efficiency and more zeal when they are independent; and I should say the greater the proportion of their independence the greater will be their zeal and activity.

1141. What is about the number of population which your lordship thinks can be well administered by the minister or ministers of a single church?—That will depend a good deal upon the concentration of the population. Supposing the population to be concentrated, I think a clergyman may manage 2,000.

1142. A single clergyman?—Whenever there is a population of 2,000, I think probably the clergyman would have a curate; I should say there ought to be an incumbent and a curate. A parish with a population of 2,000 attached to it, with an incumbent and a curate, might be tolerably efficiently worked.

1143. What should you say, under ordinary circumstances, ought to be about the amount of school accommodation for such an ecclesiastical division?—I have not very carefully considered that point; but I should say about 300 or 350.

1144. Therefore you would not think it a very efficient system, by which some 30,000 or 40,000 people were put into the hands of one person, with one or two churches placed in the district, and the clergyman of the mother church having the assistance of some three or four curates?—Certainly not. I think that such a population would be much more efficiently attended to by having the parish divided into a certain number of districts, with churches in them, the incumbents of which should be independent. Though I am aware that in many cases there would be some sort of dependence, I believe they would be practically independent.

1145. Does your lordship see any advantages in the system of the administration of a large population emanating from one person?—I think the advantages are greatly on the other side; that is my decided opinion.

1146. Does your lordship consider that the advantages to arise among such a population, from the administration of one person, would be such as belong properly to the administration of a parochial minister, or such as ought to be connected rather with the oversight of a superior church officer, such as either a rural dean, or an archdeacon or a bishop?—I think it would be better if it emanated from some officer of that description. My opinion has sometimes been asked upon that very subject. The question has often been asked me, "Then would you have no head, no superior, over such a large population?" I say, "Yes, I would have a superior, a rural dean."

1147. You

1147. You think that the advantages which are to be derived from the administration of one man in such a case are to be derived from his having a superior office, rather than having a share in the responsibility as parochial minister?—I consider that there may be some advantage in there being one responsible person over a great many others, but I think the advantages decidedly preponderate on the other side.

1148. Has your lordship had an opportunity of contrasting the two systems of administration in the course of your experience, and can you state the result of such comparison, without going into individual instances?—In all the parishes and large towns in my diocese there are quasi independent districts. I do not recollect at this moment any case where there are anything like 30,000 or 40,000 persons under one clergyman, who is practically the only responsible and independent person; therefore I cannot say that I have ever had an opportunity of comparing the two systems in their absolute unmodified character.

1149. Your lordship has encouraged the formation of conventional districts in which the curate is to all intents and purposes the incumbent?—Yes.

1150. Where that system has been adopted a great deal more good has been done than where a large parish has remained in the hands of one incumbent?—That is my belief, certainly.

1151. Is there any reason why a district should not be assigned in those cases?—I cannot see any reason why a legal district should not be assigned; but I think that the assignment of a conventional district is the next best thing upon that principle.

1152. Your lordship is aware that by the 8 & 9 Vict. cap. 70. sec. 17, wherever a district has been assigned as a chapelry either by the Church Commissioners or the Ecclesiastical Commissioners, that district chapelry becomes a perpetual curacy and benefice, and it is declared the minister "shall not be a stipendiary curate, but shall be and be esteemed "in law to be a perpetual curate and body politic and corporate," and so forth; "and "such perpetual curate shall thenceforth have within and over the district chapelry so "assigned sole and exclusive cure of souls, and shall not be in anywise subject to the "control or interference of the rector, vicar, or minister of the parish;" that is in every case where a district has been assigned?—I am aware of that.

1153. In such cases the minister is to all intents and purposes the incumbent, except that he has not the tithes or endowments; for all spiritual purposes he is subject to no interference?—Yes.

1154. Have you districts in your diocese of 10,000 or 15,000 persons under the charge of one clergyman?—Yes. I am sorry to say that I have still one of 19,000 which I am most anxious to break up.

1155. And with not more churches than one within it?—With only one church. I have an instance in the parish of Leeds of a population of 19,000 and upwards with only one church, one incumbent, and two curates.

1156. You would, if you could, break up every large parish into districts, of what extent of population?—You cannot at first make so complete a subdivision as may be desirable. I would begin with districts of 3,000 or 4,000, as we have been doing in several parishes. We are reducing them now by farther subdivisions to districts of about 2,000 or 3,000.

1157. Do you find a material improvement in the moral and spiritual condition of such places?—Very decided. I have no hesitation in saying so. I believe it is generally acknowledged that there is a decided improvement from the subdivision.

1158. Have you had difficulties about church rates in maintaining those new churches?—Yes, very great; because no church rate can be claimed for them within their own district, and the mother church will not allow a portion of its church rates to go to the support of the district church. In order to obviate that difficulty to a certain extent, whenever we, from our diocesan church building society, have made grants, we have always insisted upon ten per cent. being reserved as a repair fund; therefore in all the churches which we have aided there is a repair fund to set against the want of church rates.

1159. Is that fund also appropriated to the maintenance of the church services?—No; we consider such appropriation as a breach of faith with our church building society. We do not allow it. The repair fund is simply for the repair of the church.

1160. Is great difficulty practically found in maintaining the churches adequately without the assistance of a church rate, putting aside repairs?—Yes; the clergymen find difficulty, and are put to considerable straits, at times, in very poor districts.

1161. You find practically great inconvenience in subdividing parishes into small districts, from the necessity of making some of those districts consist almost entirely of the poorest classes?—Yes; there is a frequent struggle on the part of the incumbent of the district to be divided; we have found difficulties in that way. The incumbent of the district to be divided is naturally anxious to keep as much as he can of the more wealthy population.

1162. Has the circumstance of the necessity of sometimes constituting districts entirely of the poorest classes at all altered your lordship's view of the importance of such subdivision?—No, I should say not.

1163. How in such places are you able to meet the wants of the district as to schools, and as to the maintenance of the church, where the population is almost entirely poor?—I can only

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only say that schools do rise. I am sorry to say that I can quote instances where schools having arisen have been shut up again; but there are others in which, by skilful management, and by procuring good masters and mistresses they have become nearly self-supporting.

1164. Has any system been established by which there is a community of assistance, by aid being lent by the mother church to the daughter church in such matters, either as to schools or church maintenance?—I believe not. Of course private benevolence may contribute to relieve the wants of the daughter church; but that is not done systematically, that I am aware of, in any instance.

1165. Does your lordship think that end might be effected in any way by church unions, so as to enable in such cases the wealthy original mother church to contribute towards the necessities of the poorer daughter church?—That is a subject to which I never turned my attention. It might possibly be done; but I am not prepared to say how far the plan could be carried out. It no doubt would be a mitigation of the evil, if the parties would consent to it. It is an idea well worth entertaining; but I do not know how far it would succeed.

Rev. C. Parsons.

The Reverend CHARLES PARSONS examined.

1166. YOU are curate of Saint Mary's, Southampton?—I am.

1167. How long have you held that curacy?—Nearly ten years.

1168. Is there any other curate?—There are two assistant curates.

1169. What is the population of the parish?—In the census of 1841 the population was 14,700. I should imagine that now it cannot be less than 20,000.

1170. Have you more than one church?—There was only one church till lately; but we have lately raised a district church for a separate district of about 4,000 people.

1171. Assigned to it by the Commissioners?—Assigned to it by the Commissioners.

1172. Is there any endowment for the new church?—None.

1173. Are the endowments of the mother church considerable?—I do not exactly know what they are; but the tithes connected with the church are commuted; they are supposed to be considerable; between 2,000*l.* and 3,000*l.* a year they are supposed to be. I know the amount of commutation of some of the tithes, but I do not exactly know all.

1174. Is the incumbent non-resident?—He is.

1175. Has he always been non-resident?—He has held the living, I think, fifty-three or fifty-four years, and I do not think he has resided for six months during that time.

1175.* Has it struck you that a further division of the parish is desirable?—Certainly.

1176. And more churches?—Certainly, it is what we have tried to accomplish for some time.

1177. What is the total accommodation in the church?—The mother church accommodates about 1,600.

1178. How many free?—About 900; rather more than 900 free.

1179. In the district church how many sittings are there?—In the district church there are 1,200, with about 600 free.

1180. Your own experience leaves you no doubt as to the great desirableness of dividing such a parish?—I should imagine that it is perfectly necessary to the proper performance of the pastoral care of the parish.

1181. The endowment you state to consist of commuted tithes; is there any glebe?—Ninety acres of glebe,

1182. In the town, or near it?—Within the borough; just outside the town.

1183. Is it built on, or not?—Very little of it is built on indeed; it is all planned out for building.

1184. Is it capable of great improvement as to value?—I should think so. It has been so, certainly; but property has rather fallen in value in Southampton lately, and it rather falls off every day, for building purposes.

1185. What schools are there connected with the church?—There is one schoolhouse; under one roof there are three schools, for boys, girls, and infants, which I built myself.

1186. How long has that been built?—I built it when first I took the curacy. It provides for 500 children.

1187. Are there schools connected with the district church?—They are building them now, for 500 children also.

1188. How is the mother church repaired, and how are the expenses of divine service defrayed?—By a church rate.

1189. Is it the same for the district church?—Not for the district church. I think that a certain sum is placed aside from the pew rents of the district church for the repairs.

1190. Have

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1190. Have you any notion as to the number of dissenters in that parish?—It would be very difficult to say, so many have come into the parish from the villages, who probably before, in fact we know, before went to church in their several villages, but now, having no place for them, they go where they can, and many nowhere, I am sorry to say.

1191. Do you happen to know the number of dissenting places of worship in that parish?—There are only three distinct places built purposely for worship; the others meet in a room. But there is one just completed, and to be opened to-morrow, to hold 1,200; an independent chapel, close adjoining the church.

1192. Do you think that the subdivision of the parish would be the means of facilitating the erection of additional churches?—I should think it would, certainly. The parish itself is very poor, and therefore if the parish were divided into districts under Sir Robert Peel's Act, there would be very little chance of their getting much money, unless they were helped by friends of the Church out of the parish.

1193. But still do you think that they would be more ready to exert themselves for their own district?—No doubt of it. Since those two curates have been appointed, which is only lately, the people have been more ready to come forward to assist us.

1194. What system of visitation are you able to establish, with the number of clergy you have, over that population?—We divide the whole into three districts; in fact I may call it four districts. The second curate takes one, the third curate another, and I take the larger. I take two districts, and they take one each. Theirs consists of about 4,000 each, and mine of about 8,000.

1195. You feel that you cannot adequately visit 8,000 people?—Certainly not; not even with the aid of the district visitors.

1196. How long have the two curates been appointed?—One two years ago; the other when I first was offered the curacy. I declined to take it without an assistant curate.

1197. Is the population likely to increase by means of additional buildings?—Not so rapidly as it has done. It is increasing now, but not so rapidly as it has done. The new docks at Southampton and the opening of the railway caused a great number of labourers to come, and houses sprung up most rapidly. When I say that the population from 1841 must have increased 6,000 or 7,000, it is evident that there must be a great increase in the number of small houses, and they are still building small houses.

1198. Is there any other very large parish in Southampton?—No. The next sized parish is All Saints, with 6,000 population.

1199. How many churches are there?—Three churches. Every other parish in Southampton is well provided for.

1200. The increase of population in Southampton is chiefly in St. Mary's?—Almost entirely. We are almost the only parish in which there is any building ground, and in which there can be any increase.

1201. What is the character of the population of St. Mary's, morally speaking, compared with other parts of Southampton?—Where there is an immense number of poor people congregated together in a parish like that it must be naturally bad; but I do not think that it is more immoral, in fact perhaps less so. I think they have scarcely had time yet for much corruption; they have come only lately from their own villages. They are not so corrupt yet as I fear they will be, if something is not done for them. Perhaps I might mention that besides Saint Mary's Intra, to which all the preceding questions have referred, the parish of Saint Mary's includes a much larger space in Saint Mary's Extra, but it is under separate pastoral care.

1202. Is it under a different patron?—No; it is in the same patronage.

1203. Is there any feeling in the parish on the subject of the necessity of a subdivision?—There is a very strong feeling of the necessity of something being done, either by a subdivision or in some way, certainly; so strong a feeling that I have found it militate very much indeed against my doing anything lately, and I think as long as the parish stays in this state those out of the parish will not feel inclined to assist it much. This feeling has acted very much against me for several years, and it is with great difficulty that the little has been done that has been done.

1204. Do you get church rates?—Yes; we have never been absolutely refused a church rate. It was never contested but once; that was the year before I took the curacy, and then we succeeded in getting a rate. I rather suspect that the next time we ask for a rate we shall have it contested.

1205. From your experience of the management of that parish, should you think it more desirable to have it divided for spiritual purposes into several adequate districts, or that it should be provided with a sufficient number of churches, each of those churches being provided with a stipendiary curate dependent upon the incumbent of the mother church?—I can scarcely answer that question from my experience of the working of that particular parish. If I am asked my own private opinion, I have always been of opinion that one head to a large parish is better than a subdivision; that the duties of the parish would be better provided for, and more care taken of it, by one head, directing the whole machinery of the subdivided district, and being the head of the whole. I have always

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imagined that the duties would be better performed with one head than by being subdivided into separate parishes, unless the income of the parish were very great, and were equally divided among the incumbents.

1206. Would that be your opinion, supposing there were a competent endowment for all the additional churches?—Certainly not, if there were a competent endowment; but where there is a district of three or four thousand people, very poor, and where at the same time the people in the outlying districts are almost all paupers, they must have somebody to look to. If a clergyman is placed with a very poor endowment little can be done, either in the way of schools or anything else. Perhaps I may add, that the impression of the parish is rather contrary to my own impression; the parish has generally thought that it ought to be subdivided into entirely separate districts.

1207. Is there any other point that you wish to mention to the Commissioners relative to the parish of St. Mary's Southampton?—There is only perhaps one point. I may mention that in St. Mary's Extra, a part about which I have said very little, as it is not under my care, they are very much in want of some subdivision. It is a very great district; very wide and scattered.

1208. Is that part of the parish of St. Mary's?—It is part of the parish, but it is very peculiarly situated; it is out of the borough, and is quite independent of the population of which I have been speaking, of 20,000.

1209. Who has the spiritual care of it?—It is a large parish in the gift of the rector of Saint Mary's. A great part of it is in the parish of South Stoneham. The vicarage of South Stoneham is in the gift of the rector of Saint Mary's, and he has the management of a very large parish indeed. He has made one district out of his parish; but there is room for two more, certainly, with great advantage.

1210. How is the incumbent of Stoneham endowed?—He has the small tithes of Stoneham. The rector of Saint Mary's has the great tithes of Stoneham; indeed the great tithes of the whole town of Southampton, and of all the neighbourhood round, come to the rector of Saint Mary's.

1211. Is there a considerable population in Saint Mary's Extra?—A very considerable population, and an increasing population.

1212. It is mentioned as 1,540 in the Clergy List, which contains the census of 1841?—One district now has upwards of 2,000. I imagine that you may put them down at from 3,000 to 4,000. And the population is very scattered; so much so, that it is more difficult to visit than a population that is more together.

Rev. Thomas Dale.

The Reverend THOMAS DALE, a Member of the Commission, examined.

1213. How long have you been vicar of Saint Pancras?—Since the month of June 1846.

1214. What is the population of the whole parish?—The return in 1841 was 129,598; the increase is estimated at about 2,000 per annum, at least.

1215. What is about the present population?—The present population probably exceeds 150,000.

1216. By law you have the sole spiritual charge of that population?—I have, with the exception of two districts which have been formed under the Patronage Act, but which are not, in consequence of the peculiar provisions of the local Act sufficiently separated. I mean by this that questions might arise touching the obligation of the vicar to visit, if called upon within those districts.

1217. As the law now stands, referring to your local Act, you have not the power of divesting yourself legally of the spiritual cure of any part of that parish?—I have not that power. By the provisions of the local Act the several ministers are only bound to perform the duty *within* their respective chapels; and in order, therefore, to provide for the pastoral care of the parish, I have been obliged to arrange districts conventionally, giving up a certain portion of the income arising from fees and offerings to each district clergyman, on condition of his entering into an agreement to take the pastoral duty within such limits as I assign to him.

1218. But all that is simply under a moral obligation?—It is simply under a moral obligation.

1219. The agreement might at any time be departed from, either by the vicar or the curates?—It might, but for the interference of the diocesan, who has kindly enabled me to correct in some degree the imperfections of the present law, by allowing me to introduce into every nomination an express condition that the clergyman licensed by the bishop to a church or district shall visit within certain limits. But legally there is no positive obligation.

1220. With respect to the offices performed in the different churches or chapels, what is the state of things?—By one of the provisions of the local Act (56 Geo. 3. cap. 39.), "no "christenings can be performed in any of the chapels without leave of the vicar." Banns cannot

cannot be published nor marriages solemnized in any but the parish church; and though under the bishop's licence marriages are now permitted to be solemnized in the two churches built under the Patronage Act, that is, in Christ Church, Albany Street, and All Saints, Gordon Square, the number of persons availing themselves of that privilege is exceedingly small, consequently the average annual number of marriages solemnized at the parish church still exceeds 1,000.

1221. How is it with regard to other offices of the Church, christenings and burials?—I have already stated that christenings can only be performed in the chapels by leave of the vicar. The same rule of course applies to churchings. It was formerly the practice for christenings (I use the term "christenings" instead of "baptisms," because that is the term used in the local Act,) to be performed at the several chapels, the dues for which were paid to the vicar; but shortly after I came into the parish I made an arrangement by which every minister performing any service in a consecrated place should receive the fee, and those fees have been subsequently given up to the several district clergymen.

1222. Do you believe that the rites of the Church, when performed in large numbers together in one place, have the same effect upon the feelings and consciences of those towards whom they are administered as when they are administered in smaller numbers, and by ministers upon whom the parties attend for other purposes?—I think the moral and spiritual effect of celebrating marriages in the mass, taking fifteen, twenty, or twenty-five together, is decidedly injurious.

1223. It becomes a mere mechanical process?—I fear so, in the case of the majority. But I am bound to say that this only occurs upon the great festivals of the Church, such as Christmas Day and Easter Day. I mean that large numbers rarely come together for marriage except upon those days.

1224. What is the greatest number of christenings that ever took place at one time and at one place?—I think the highest number returned to me at one time by my curates has been thirty-six. The number at the parish church has greatly diminished since I have given the fees for the services performed at the several chapels to the several ministers; and it would have been still further diminished had not one of the ministers refused to accept the fees on condition of performing the occasional or pastoral duty, and consequently in a chapel situated in a most densely populated part of the parish it is a very rare thing indeed for any office of the Church to be celebrated.

1225. Are any fees taken for baptisms?—No fee is ever demanded for baptism as a sacrament of the Church, but a fee of 1*s.* 6*d.* is required for registration. On two days in the week, namely, Thursday and Saturday, children are baptised and registered at the parish church without any charge whatever, in consequence of which I have a greater number of unpaid baptisms at St. Pancras than of baptisms for the registration of which fees are paid. Occasionally special or surplus fees are given, at the discretion of the party.

1226. But when baptisms take place without payment, is there any fee for registration?—There is no fee whatever taken, or at least demanded, on two days of the week, Thursday and Saturday, for registration.

1227. Before you had those two days in the week, were parties refused baptism when they did not pay?—I am not competent to say what might have been done before the time of my incumbency. I am not aware that any person has ever been refused baptism at St. Pancras on account of the nonpayment of a fee since I have had the living. Before that time I have no knowledge what might have been the practice or custom of the church.

1228. Registration now takes place on Thursdays and Saturdays without payment?—It does.

1229. Have the clerk and the sexton any portion of the registration fee?—There is a fee of 6*d.* to the clerk. The whole fee for registration is 1*s.* 6*d.*, of which 1*s.* goes to the vicar, and 6*d.* to the clerk.

1230. Upon the two days in the week is there any fee paid to the clerk?—No. That circumstance I can explain. The clerk of the parish is a gentleman of station and responsibility, a near connexion of the late vicar; and when I came into the parish, and explained to him my views upon the subject, he at once said, in the most liberal manner, that whenever I thought proper to sacrifice my fee he was quite willing to sacrifice his. In the case of duty performed at any of the parochial chapels by the several clerks a fee is reserved to him on all the registrations, except in the instance of the poor.

1231. Do you think it very desirable that you should be relieved from the difficulties imposed upon you by the local Act, and that, with the concurrence of the proper authorities, you should be empowered to divide your parish into separate and distinct incumbencies, so as to place a manageable district under the charge of each clergyman?—I think it would be exceedingly desirable, if a competent provision could be made for the several ministers; but my parish is of such nature that the wealthy and the poor are in distinct masses, and some districts would consist so entirely of poor that there would be great difficulty in supporting their charities or paying the expenses of their churches. In point of fact I may mention, in order to give the Commissioners some idea of the difficulties of the case, that the management of the financial affairs of the Church in St. Pancras is vested in a body of church trustees, who have now under their control one church and seven chapels,

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of which two only yield a surplus revenue. Church rates being no longer collected in St. Pancras, the church is almost dependent for its support upon the surplus income derived from the pew rents of the parish church and Camden chapel, and also from the burial fees, which last have very greatly diminished in amount for several years past, and are still decreasing. So that the difficulty would be this: if you were to divide St. Pancras as at present for purposes of pastoral superintendence it might be and ought to be divided, you would throw upon masses of the poor the burden of supporting their church, which they would be utterly unable to sustain. The principle of the local Act of St. Pancras is, that the wealthy shall provide for the poor. If that principle had been thoroughly carried out the work of church extension might have proceeded much more favourably than it has done; but from the great extent of the parish no sympathy is felt by the wealthy at one end with the poor at another, in consequence of which those districts where there is the greatest spiritual destitution are dependent rather upon the liberality of particular congregations than upon the support of the poor by the wealthy parishioners generally. If the district attached to my church were made a separate parish, assistance of various kinds would be withdrawn from the poorer parts of the parish which they would be very ill able to spare. But so far as the general principle of pastoral superintendence is concerned, I have no hesitation whatever in expressing my opinion that the subdivision of such an overgrown parish is most desirable.

1232. Is not there prebendal property connected with your parish from which endowments might be provided for the poorer districts?—There is such property, and of very considerable amount. There is one stall, vacant at the present period, from which an income of 300*l.* a year arises, and from which I am applying to the Ecclesiastical Commissioners for an endowment to three of the poorer districts. That property was vested in an ancestor of the present Lord Southampton by an Act of Parliament passed in the year 1768 (8 Geo. 3.), and it is now computed to be worth many thousands a year. There is also the stall of Cantlowes, of which the revenue at present is said to exceed 3,000*l.* a year, and which is similarly vested in the Marquis Camden; but one third of the ground rents is enjoyed by the prebendary, and will fall to the Ecclesiastical Commissioners on the avoidance of the stall.

1233. One third of the present improved value?—Yes. I expect we shall get about 2,000*l.* a year from this source. There is also the prebend of St. Pancras, the *corpus* of which consists of about seventy acres, covered with small houses of the most miserable description, but yielding a considerable revenue, the amount of which I cannot state.

1234. Are the provisions of your local Act such as to prevent the Church Commissioners from putting in force the powers given them by their Acts in other cases?—The Church Commissioners have been applied to on the subject; but they have been prevented from interfering by the provisions of the local Act, for though they might have set out metes and bounds for particular districts, there was no power of compelling the ministers of the several chapels to perform any pastoral duty within those districts.

1235. What are the chief practical hindrances to a proper pastoral superintendence occasioned by the local Act?—The vicar may require the several ministers to perform any duty *in* the chapels; they are further bound to reside within such distance of their chapels as he shall approve; and in the event of any of them becoming incapable of performing or unwilling to perform their several duties, he has the power to nominate another minister; but, according to the opinion of eminent counsel, he cannot require any minister to visit a sick person, or to baptise a child at the house of the parent, even in dying circumstances; nor can the ministers of any chapels, excepting those which have been built either wholly or in part by the Commissioners, receive a larger stipend than 200*l.* a year. The consequence of this is, that one clergyman, now minister of a parochial chapel, who has laboured in the parish for upwards of twenty years, who has been exemplary in the discharge of every parochial duty, and in whose district all the parochial institutions are eminently flourishing, but whose chapel was built by means of a parochial rate, can receive only 200*l.* a year, while a neighbouring clergyman, who performs no parochial duty whatever, whose services are limited to the Sunday morning and afternoon duties, having a church which was built at the expense of the Commissioners, receives double that amount, provided that the pew rents produce it.

1236. Have any attempts been made to get rid of those restrictions?—In the year 1843 a bill was brought into Parliament for the better regulating of the ecclesiastical affairs of St. Pancras. One of the objects of this bill was to increase the stipends of the ministers of the chapels; another was to divide the parish, under the authority of the Commissioners, into ecclesiastical districts, but not into distinct parishes. This was opposed by the vestry of the parish, under the impression that it would render them liable to church rates, in consequence of which the whole of the expenses, amounting to nearly 1,000*l.*, fell upon the church trustees individually, and the professional charges of their legal adviser are still unpaid. This of course has operated and does operate as a great impediment to bringing forward any other measure of parochial reform. In the early part of 1847 a scheme for the subdivision of the parish was put forth by the vicar, but rejected by the vestry; and in consequence, though the work of church extension still proceeds, the churches which are built cannot be made parochial. In the districts which are without a church ministers have been appointed by the vicar, and have been paid thus far from a fund raised by the friends of church extension.

1237. You were formerly vicar of Saint Bride's, Fleet Street?—I was vicar of Saint Bride's, Fleet Street, for eleven years.

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1238. What is your experience of the difference you have found between the two parishes, namely, St. Bride's and St. Pancras, with reference to the intercourse and communion between the clergyman and his parishioners?—I have never for many years performed less of strictly pastoral duty than since I have been vicar of the great parish of St. Pancras. The reason of this is, that nearly the whole of my time is devoted to the management of parochial affairs, and the exertions which are required in order to provide churches and clergymen for the several districts. I have reserved to myself a small portion of the church district, in which I endeavour, as far as I can, to visit pastorally; but I feel that it is utterly impossible to be efficient as a parochial clergyman so long as I am called upon to perform duties which more properly belong to a higher order in the Church.

1239. In St. Bride's you could at any time call your parishioners around you to consult with them, and to carry out your plans for the good of the parish; but in St. Pancras you find that you can do nothing of the sort?—That has constituted one of my greatest difficulties. In St. Bride's I had ready access to the whole body of the parishioners; and if what I wished to do was reasonable and right, I found no difficulty whatever in persuading them to co-operate with me; but with regard to St. Pancras the case is essentially altered. The parish is governed by a vestry, under Sir John Hobhouse's Act, consisting of 120 individuals, who represent only a very small portion of the parishioners, because the local Act deprives the vestry of the power of interfering with the affairs of the church; and, in consequence, the larger rate-payers, a majority of whom are, I believe, members of the Church of England, take no interest whatever in the management of parochial affairs. I cannot better illustrate this than by stating the fact, that recently, at a contested election for vestrymen, not one-fifth of the ratepayers thought it worth their while to go down to vote.

1240. So that, in fact, the vestry of the parish neither is in concord with the clergy, nor possesses the confidence of the great body of persons in the parish?—The great body of the more respectable inhabitants are quite unconcerned about the proceedings of the vestry.

1241. But yet they have the power to stand in your way frequently, have not they?—The nature of the impediment offered is this: the Commissioners are aware that, in endeavouring to obtain an Act of Parliament, the expenses are very great, if there is any opposition. When I first entered the parish, I thought that as truth and reason had been listened to in Saint Bride's they would meet with equal attention in St. Pancras; and, in consequence, I attended the vestry meetings, and used all my exertions to persuade the vestry to make no opposition to the plan; that was all that I asked; and I pledged myself (which was a very bold thing to do) that if they would refrain from opposing me I would take care that to every church I built there should be attached a repairing fund of such an amount as to prevent the parishioners from becoming liable to church rates; but my efforts were unavailing; and had I attempted to carry forward the scheme, I should have had to encounter the nominal opposition of the parish, though it would have been the real opposition only of the vestry, inasmuch as the vestry cannot be considered to represent the parish.

1242. Is not it the case, that one of the grounds assigned for opposition to your plan was, that the subdivision of the parishes which it would effect would tend to increase the influence of the Church of England?—The words of the resolution, which I can give exactly, and which was passed by a majority of forty-two over twenty, were, "That this "vestry, although admitting the great zeal of the vicar in the support of the principles of "his own persuasion, cannot, consistently with regard to the religious feelings of a large "portion of the people of this parish, lend itself to any scheme that might now or here-"after jeopardize their present freedom from the payment of church rates, or increase the "power and patronage of the Church of England as by law established. They, therefore, "do consider it to be their duty not to entertain the proposed arrangements for the "ecclesiastical division of the parish."

1243. Do you believe that these large parishes, in this condition, are at all an adequate representation of what is imagined to be the parochial system of the Church of England?—I think they are subversive of the very first principle of the system, which is, that the parochial minister, either by himself or by his curates, should be acquainted with every individual in the parish, at all events with every one who attends regularly upon his ministry, and who resides within the limits of his district.

1244. At Saint Bride's you had that knowledge of your parishioners?—I had that knowledge of the poor, and, to a great extent, of the classes in better circumstances.

1245. The poor had that knowledge of you?—They had. I should rather say, perhaps, they had that knowledge of the ministers of the church. When I was in Saint Bride's, the plan I followed was this: I divided the parish between my curates, so far as visitation was concerned, with the understanding that in every case of emergency they would call upon me. I myself was understood to be always accessible to every parishioner, under circumstances of trial or sickness; indeed, it was my habit to call whenever I heard of anything of the kind; and therefore, though I cannot say that even in St. Bride's I knew every parishioner, yet of this I am perfectly assured, that every parishioner of any standing knew me, and every parishioner felt that he might have access to the parochial minister for every spiritual purpose at any proper time.

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1246. What was the population of St. Bride's?—Before the district of Trinity Church was separated, it was about 6,700; after that, about 4,500.

1247. Can you state about the proportion of visitable persons in the parish before it was divided?—The statement which I make can only be an approximation; but I should think that about one-third of the population were what would be termed "visitable."

1248. Do you believe that the condition of the parish of Trinity and of the parish of St. Bride's was improved by the subdivision; or would it have been better if they had both remained under the control of the clergyman of the original parish?—I feel some difficulty in answering that question. Had St. Bride's remained as it was when the new church was originally designed, a subdivision might have been desirable; but those who are acquainted with the City of London know there is a constant tide of emigration flowing out from the city to the suburbs, and that, in consequence, the number of poor is being continually increased, and the number of those who are able to supply their necessities proportionably diminished. Now the district of Trinity Church contains a large proportion of poor, and, in consequence, the minister appointed to that church has been less adequately remunerated than he was even while he was curate of the parish of St. Bride's.

1249. Then it was, in that case, a question of remuneration only?—Not a question of remuneration only, because I hold that a clergyman is called upon to do something for the temporal relief of the persons he visits; but where the income is so scanty, it is impossible that the minister of Trinity can do for those poor people what they were accustomed to receive from me, or from my curates as representing me.

1250. You could draw upon a larger fund?—We could draw upon a larger fund.

1251. You had dissenters in the parish of St. Bride's?—We had individual dissenters but there was no dissenting chapel in the parish, nor did dissent ever assume a consistent shape and form; by this I mean, that it never met me either in the vestry or in the parish, and I had every reason to suppose that I possessed individually the regard and goodwill of many estimable dissenters. It was, indeed, the general impression in my parish that the churchmen would support me in everything, and that the dissenters would oppose me in nothing.

1252. Do you look upon the breaking up of those large parishes into smaller districts as tending rather to promote harmony among the different classes of the population?—I have no hesitation in stating, that were it not for an overwhelming sense of duty, I should prefer my former position to my present one, on that very account. I have often thought, with great regret, of the more near and intimate connexion which existed between me and my parishioners at St. Bride's; and I have felt, and do feel, an earnest wish that I could attain something like an approximation to it at St. Pancras.

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The Reverend WALTER FARQUHAR HOOK, D.D., a Member of the Commission, examined.

1253. YOU are the vicar of the parish of Leeds?—Yes.

1254. What is the population of that parish, in the widest sense?—The population of the parish of Leeds is 150,000.

1255. That is the population of the parish for civil purposes?—Yes.

1256. And it was the population of the parish for ecclesiastical purposes when you took the vicarage?—Yes.

1257. That population has only one vestry at present?—Only one vestry. Each chapelry has a vestry for managing its own chapel. There is one vestry for the whole parish, and all the chapelries are liable to be rated for the parish church. There are a variety of small chapelries and out-townships which have vestries, and they can lay rates upon their own chapelry or township for their own chapel. That is the reason that we cannot get a church rate. Each township lays a rate for its own chapel, and each township is also rateable to the parish church, and, consequently, even very good friends of the Church refuse to pay a double church rate.

1258. What are the present ecclesiastical circumstances of the parish as to the number of churches and chapels?—The number of clergy in the township of Leeds is now twenty-nine, and in the out-townships eighteen, making forty-seven altogether, which is an increase of twenty-three since the year 1837.

1259. When were you appointed to the vicarage?—In 1837.

1260. What number of churches is there in Leeds?—The number of churches is, in the town of Leeds, thirteen, and in the remainder of the parish eleven. In 1837 there were nine churches in the town and ten in the out-townships.

1261. There are about two clergymen to each church?—Very nearly; there are six in my church.

1262. What is your opinion, from your experience at Leeds, of the advantages, on the one hand, of administering from a centre over a large surface, or, on the other hand, of dividing a district

district into several spiritual responsibilities?—My opinion is very strongly in favour of a subdivision, so as to bring every clergyman to a knowledge and acquaintance with his parishioners. When first I went to the parish of Leeds, acting under the advice of my diocesan the Bishop of Ripon, I proceeded to divide the parish into districts, conventional districts, in each of which I placed a curate, who has had full power over that district; and I have never interfered with him, whatever his opinions might be, but he has worked the district as if it were a distinct parish. The clergy of the several churches or chapels accepted districts on the same terms; and the consequence has been, a very large increase of pastoral superintendence. When first I came to Leeds the whole of the pastoral superintendence of the township of Leeds, containing 90,000 persons, devolved upon three clergymen, viz., the vicar and two curates; the consequence was, that there were scarcely any parochial visitations. We divided the town into districts, and the clergyman of each district, being left free to act at his own discretion, regarded the district as his parish; I was pledged not to remove him, or to interfere in his proceedings. The result is, one or more schools have been built in every district, and that the children under education have increased in the national schools from 870 to 4,208, and from 1,840, in the Sunday schools, to 5,140. The number of clergy has increased from fourteen to twenty-nine. This statement has reference to the township of Leeds only. Taking the whole parish, the number of the clergy is forty-seven, and there are in the schools 10,541 children.

1263. Have you any means of stating the increase of communicants?—Not except in my own church. In my own church it has increased to a very large extent; from about sixty to 1,000.

1264. You have found no diminution in the attendance at your church owing to the increase of other churches?—No. The parish church was not well attended when first I went there; now it is quite full.

1265. Morning and afternoon?—Particularly in the evening. It is not so full of the working classes in the morning.

1266. Have you a very large congregation of the working classes?—Very large. We seat 2,500 persons. There is always this number of persons in the church on Sunday evenings, unless the day be very wet, and they are chiefly of the working class.

1267. Are your seats all open seats?—All, except in the galleries.

1268. Are the seats rented in the gallery?—In the gallery the pews are private property. Our old church had galleries, which were built under faculties, and when we rebuilt the church we could not remove them. But there is an understanding, which I believe is customary in London, that after the commencement of the Psalms the pews in the galleries are open. This has been carried into effect during the last two or three years. As soon as the Psalms begin the pews have been opened.

1269. That is understood and acted upon?—That is understood and acted upon. I believe that we can legally insist upon a pew being opened after a certain time. So I have been told by a very competent authority.

1270. At a certain time fixed by law?—So I am informed. I believe that you cannot take possession of a person's pew till you know that he does not intend to come.

1271. Some pews are kept locked, are not they?—Not in my church. I believe you may remove the lock. I know a case in a large town where the churchwardens have a pass-key, and allow the locks to remain on, but by the pass-key they open the pews at a certain period. With us we do not allow them to put on locks.

1272. You have made a private arrangement with your curates, by which you have assigned to them certain districts?—Yes.

1273. And you have determined not to remove them, but to give them every amount of spiritual independence you can?—I have never interfered with them in any way whatever. I have never visited even their schools, except at their request.

1274. That rested originally upon your free will?—Yes.

1275. Does it now so rest, or is that in any way altered by subsequent legislation?—Some of them have been made Peel's districts now; and there are some districts made by various Church Building Acts.

1276. What number have you in that way hived off, if it may be so expressed?—We have six in the township of Leeds; that is, six out of nine, either parishes under the Leeds Vicarage Act, or legal districts constituted under the Church Building Acts.

1277. The remainder still remain in their original position?—Yes.

1278. Have you tried to give to arrangements a legal form by specific Acts?—Yes.

1279. Did you encounter much difficulty in procuring those Acts, on the ground of expense?—In the case of the Leeds Vicarage Act, very great indeed.

1280. How many districts still remain, whose distinct conventional existence depends upon the pleasure of the vicar of Leeds?—There are six out of the nine in the township of Leeds which have been formed either into districts or new parishes under the Leeds Vicarage Act. Under the Leeds Vicarage Act there have been formed four entirely new parishes. Those are in the township of Leeds.

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1281. It is in carrying out this that you have incurred considerable difficulty and expense?—The difficulty and expense that I incurred was in obtaining an Act for dividing the whole parish. There is now a local Act in the parish of Leeds, by which any clergyman having a district, and performing certain conditions, can convert his district into a vicarage entirely independent of the mother church.

1282. Independent only *quoad sacra*?—Independent in everything but poor rates and church rates. We have reserved church rates. I think the Act exonerates them from the payment of church rates.

1283. You make them distinct vicarages?—Distinct vicarages for every ecclesiastical purpose whatever.

1284. Does the Act prevent them from laying on church rates?—We do not interfere with that at all. I found so much opposition getting up about church rates, that I thought it better not to interfere with that.

1285. It cost you a great deal of trouble and money to get that Act?—It cost me a great deal of trouble and a great deal of money. In defraying the expenses I was helped most liberally by my friends, but it cost a large sum.

1286. Can you say about how much it cost you to obtain the Act; was it more than 1,000*l.*?—It cost 1,468*l.* to obtain the Act; the fees of the House of Lords being excused, and the solicitor deducting 200*l.* from his bill.

1287. You have heard the advantages stated of the system of governing a large population by a parochial minister at the head of a large district, acting through curates?—Yes.

1288. Is it your opinion that those advantages are such as belong properly to the position of a parochial minister, or to a different order in the Church?—I think they belong to a different order in the Church. That system can be carried on very well if it is a clearly understood thing, and if the powers of the rector or vicar be admitted by the subordinate clergy, and recognised by the bishop. The rector or vicar has then a kind of archdeaconal authority. This was the case under the late Archbishop of York to a considerable extent, during his episcopate; but the difficulty of the rector or vicar (his powers not being clearly and legally defined) is this, that while affairs may be well conducted so long as the subordinate clergy act cordially with him, yet if any dispute arises the subordinate clergy assert their independence, refuse to be coerced, except by the bishop, and assert, what is the fact, their equality. Therefore it is in my opinion very much better to do what my diocesan desires to do, namely, to have a *primus inter pares* as a rural dean. I should think that in large parishes the bishop did generally select for that office the incumbent of the mother church.

1289. Has not the vicar or rector of such a large parish considerable means of paralyzing individual exertions, without having at all to the same extent the power of inspiring zeal when he is possessed of it himself; for example, is not the consent of the vicar of the parish required to a great number of parochial schemes to which he can refuse his consent in his parlour without incurring any public responsibility?—Yes; undoubtedly he might obstruct in that way a great number of things. Certainly the power of obstruction is great. On the other hand, he has the power of doing much good.

1290. May the Commissioners consider the private Act which you obtained in 1844 as embodying your opinions with respect to parochial subdivisions?—Decidedly.

1291. Has anything occurred since the passing of that Act to induce you to vary the opinions which you held upon the subject at the time of its passing?—No, nothing; except to make me feel more strongly the importance of them.

1292. The Commissioners understand the principle of that Act to be this; that whereas the year before an Act had passed for creating certain new districts, without reference to the question whether there was a church in them or not at first, and giving to those districts where a church should be provided a perfect parochial character, you were of opinion that in one respect that Act did not go quite far enough; and you were also of opinion that churches which had already been built, and which could not be touched by that Act, would be placed in an unfair relative position, if, while a perfect parochial character was given to new districts, those old churches should still remain without that entire parochial character?—Precisely; that was my object, and the great reason why I moved; and it seems to me very hard that where there has been a chapelry such as I have described, existing for two or three centuries, it should not have the full rights and powers with which these new parishes are invested.

1293. In point of fact, previously to the passing of your Act, the subdivisions of your parish were of various kinds, but none of them of a complete parochial character?—No.

1294. But under Sir Robert Peel's Act, as churches should be provided in new districts those districts would become entirely separate parishes?—Yes.

1295. Your object was by your Act to give to your old churches the same entire parochial character, and also to carry it, both with reference to those churches and to the churches under Sir Robert Peel's Act, somewhat further?—Precisely.

1296. Sir

1296. Sir Robert Peel's Act gave to the ministers of the new churches under that Act the fees and offerings within the district, but it did not give them any portion of the other endowments?—No.

1297. By your Act you propose to give the whole of the tithes and endowments which arise in each district to the minister of the district, thereby making a sacrifice yourself as vicar of Leeds in each case as a district should become a new parish?—Yes. Throughout the chapelries there are double fees; a fee to the vicar and a fee to the perpetual curate. Those are to be abolished whenever they become vicarages under the Leeds Vicarage Act.

1298. You also proposed, when certain conditions were complied with, to constitute each separate division a vicarage, by putting it upon a complete footing of equality with the mother church?—Yes; leaving the bishop to appoint a rural dean.

1299. So that your opinion, as indicated by that Act, (which opinion you still entertain,) is in favour of entire parochial subdivision?—Yes, I am in favour of entire parochial subdivision.

1300. For all ecclesiastical purposes?—Yes. I consider the primary business of a parochial minister to be this, to administer the sacraments, and to preach the Gospel; to do which effectually requires study as well as prayer; to visit from house to house; to devote himself to the consolation of the sick and sorrowing; to bring religion to bear upon individual souls; and to superintend the instruction given in the schools. These our primary duties are materially interfered with by what I may call the secular business in which the rector or vicar of a large parish finds himself to be involved. By secular business I mean that which relates to our presiding over various institutions, devising means for erecting new churches and schools; administrative rather than pastoral duties. These duties, as well as the exercise of jurisdiction over the clergy, appear to me to belong to the bishop.

1301. In the original plan which you laid before the Commissioners as the basis of your Act you propose also that the church of Leeds should be put on a different footing; that the old church should provide for its own building, and that each separate district should provide also for its own church; but you found there were difficulties in the way of such an arrangement?—I found that there would be such a decided opposition on the part of the dissenters to any movement of that sort that I withdrew it.

1302. And therefore, against your own views of what ought to have been, you consented to the introduction of a clause to leave the law of church rates as it was?—Yes. I was obliged, against my own judgment, to leave the law of church rates as it was.

1303. But you are of opinion that if an arrangement could be made for carrying that plan into effect in your parish and in other parishes it would be desirable?—Yes, certainly.

1304. Steps have been taken for carrying out your Act to the fullest extent?—Yes.

1305. Some progress has been made under it?—Some progress has been made. There has been a feeling against it, from various circumstances which I need not mention; but the feeling is wearing away, and I expect in the course of ten years to see it very effectually carried out.

1306. Are the sittings in the new churches free or let?—The principle upon which I proposed to act was to place the new churches in precisely the position of the old parish churches. Most of our churches being chapels of ease, the pews in the body of the church are private property. Before a church can be constituted a parish church it is required that the floor of the church shall be so far free that the churchwardens may seat the parishioners according to law.

1307. According to the ancient law?—According to the ancient law. The question of appropriation of pews in the new parishes can be decided by the minister and churchwardens, acting under the bishop, as is the case in old parish churches, when there is no faculty interfering.

1308. Are any of the churches maintained by pew rents?—They are almost all of them maintained by pew rents, and in this is the difficulty in carrying out this Act. It is from the pew rents that the clergymen are generally paid; consequently, before a new parish can be formed under the Leeds Vicarage Act, the floor must be cleared, and it can only be cleared by buying out the rights of the incumbent. Every district on the erection of a parsonage would have been constituted a vicarage long ago, if it had not been for that. It is required that before you form a new parish you shall place the church in a position of a parochial church.

1309. Can you get the poor to attend a church where the seats are entirely free?—I believe that the poor as well as the rich desire to have seats appropriated to them; but I say this only from what I have heard from others. The floor of my own church is entirely free, and many people come a long time before service commences to secure their places. It has been so from time immemorial, and in my church, the parish church, the system works well. The poor feel and assert that they have a right to their place in the parish church, and the wealthier classes mix with them. As all parishioners cannot be accommodated in the parish church, I think that this plan, by which any one may take his place in the church, is in our case a good one; but from what I know of other churches in the parish I should be inclined to think that the appropriation of seats to parishioners is, generally speaking, desirable.

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1310. What number of sittings does your church contain?—My church contains 2,500 sittings. When we put seats in the aisles, which is the case on Sundays, it accommodates two or three hundred more.

1311. What population do you think should be attached to your church in order to supply a good congregation?—I think to our church we ought to have six or seven thousand, provision being made under the Leeds Vicarage Act for the maintenance of two curates.

1312. Have you two or three services in the day?—I have four services every day, and three services on the Sunday.

1313. You gather attendants from other parts, besides your own districts?—From all parts of the town; people are accustomed to come to the parish church, as it is the only free church in the town.

1314. Therefore you draw a distinction between mere attendance at the church and parochial working or pastoral visitation of the people?—Decidedly. We have a great many services besides, such as cottage preaching. We have lectures in schoolrooms every week; one or two every day.

1315. Are those directed from the centre, from the mother church, or are they entirely under the control of separate incumbents?—I am speaking of what we do in our district. Every clergyman acts according to his own views in other districts.

1316. You exercise no control whatever over those clergymen that have districts of their own?—None whatever.

1317. Do they all set up their own schools?—Yes. I work with them when they ask my opinion.

1318. Are they at all assisted from any common funds?—Not common parochial funds; they are assisted from a diocesan fund which the bishop has raised.

1319. Not from any common town fund?—No; there is no common town fund.

1320. Is that diocesan fund for the maintenance as well as for the erection of schools?—No; only for erection.

1321. With regard to their maintenance, do you understand that they find great difficulty where the district principally consist of the poorer classes?—Very great difficulty; but in the parish of Leeds there is a parochial feeling still, and they go to persons in all parts of the town from the poor districts. I may be permitted to allude to one of the poorest districts (conventional districts) in Leeds, to which I appointed the Reverend George Hills, who has lately been appointed to the vicarage of Great Yarmouth. This district is inhabited exclusively by the working classes; in it there is not one resident gentleman or person of influence. The church, a very large one, was built under the Million Act. When George Hills assumed the management of the district, the congregation was miserably small, and the communicants few; the day school had gone down in number; a good master had left in consequence; and the girls' school was closed altogether. In 1848, when he left, there were three resident clergymen, two curates besides himself, three Sunday services, two daily services in the week, ten week-day lectures, the congregation greatly increased, the communicants number 200, of whom certainly not twenty had been communicants when he was appointed. Additional school accommodation had also been obtained for 821 children, making in all 1,261, instead of 440. The infant and educational staff musters two masters, four mistresses, and thirteen pupil teachers, who receive from Government 228*l.* a year, which is annually increasing. There is not in all Leeds a more promising district than St. Mary's.

1322. What is the population of that district?—The population of the district is 12,000. I mention this to show the effect of having one man devoted to one particular district.

1323. Has this gentleman two curates?—He has.

1324. Then there is still a division of labour?—Yes.

1325. There is one clergyman to 4,000 people?—Yes.

1326. Are the seats let in the church?—The seats in the church, the part of them belonging to the clergyman, are let at a low rate. It is a very poor district. The seats were to all intents and purposes free, because the church was much larger than was required for the seats that were let.

1327. What provision is there for the minister?—The income of the minister of Saint Mary's is 110*l.*, out of which the incumbent pays 20*l.*, and is responsible for 40*l.* more to meet grants from the Curates Aid Society, besides the payment of 50*l.* for the house in which his curates and himself reside. But by appointing him chaplain to the cemetery, and chaplain to the barracks, I make up the income to about 300*l.* a year. We have found that whenever the clergyman has had the real *bonâ fide* management of a district, whatever it was called, it has all worked well. It has made an immense difference. Whenever there has been a division we have found immediately a new spirit infused, and a parochial feeling has been excited. If we take the conventional districts at Leeds as specimens of small parishes, I can say that I have had the experience of twelve years for their working well.

1328. You would not be deterred by the difficulties arising from some of those districts consisting very mainly of a very poor population?—The difficulty is great, but from the case

case I have just stated it is clearly not insurmountable; but to surmount the difficulties a clergyman of more than ordinary strength both of body and mind is required. He has to beg, as well as to organize his district, and this in addition to his pastoral duties; and I may therefore say, that if you do not find some funds for the endowment of those poor districts the subdivision of parishes will be of very little service; but I hope such funds may be forthcoming. *Rev. W. F. Hook, D.D.* 12th June 1849.

1329. Independently of the smallness of the endowment, are there not some difficulties arising from the want of parties of wealth enough to contribute to the parochial charities? Yes. There is difficulty in forming a parochial feeling; but I think the clergy are generally becoming such good beggars that they do not go simply to the rich people in their own districts, but they send missions all over the country.

1330. Do you think that the means of carrying on the different schools and other charitable objects in a district which is altogether poor will be materially affected by its being made a separate and independent parish, rather than remaining in some measure dependent upon other parts of the parish?—I think that cuts both ways. If they think that the clergyman is rich, there is a feeling, "We had better leave it all to him."

1331. Would he be as likely to get help if it were an entirely separate and independent parish as if it were upon the old principle as a part of a large parish?—I think if he exerted himself he would get quite as much. I think people have pity upon a poor district; but you cannot expect every clergyman to be a good beggar.

1332. In point of fact, in a poor district, where a church is sufficiently endowed, so that that difficulty is removed, after a little time of instruction do not the poor inhabitants come forward expressing their readiness to pay for the education of their children?—Yes. A great deal depends in that case upon the schoolmaster. In a manufacturing district they easily find out what the schoolmaster is. There is a school in our town now where they have raised the price of the first class to sixpence, and we think of graduating our charges from a penny upwards.

1333. Does not that prove that if you give education that is worth anything the poor can pay for it?—To a certain extent; but it costs a considerable sum in every one of our schools to pay for those who cannot afford to pay their pennies. It costs 5*l.* or 10*l.* a year in every school.

1334. You always provide for a certain number of free scholars?—Yes. If a child that is a good scholar does not come, we inquire about it, and if we find that the parent is out of work we pay the penny a week for a certain time.

1335. Do not they value education a good deal more in the north than they do in the south, and are they more willing to pay for it?—I think they value education very much with us. I wish to state in addition to what I have said, that, whenever a *legal* district has been assigned, the progress of the Church within the assigned district has been so great as to confirm me in my opinion of the advantages resulting from the subdivision of parishes. The first legal district assigned in the township of Leeds was that of St. Mark's, where the Reverend James Fawcett, the incumbent or perpetual curate, has successfully established the parochial system, and has been instrumental in subdividing his district, a portion of which has been formed into a new parish under Sir Robert Peel's Act. The other district assigned is that of St. George's, where the incumbent or perpetual curate, the Reverend William Sinclair, having more than ordinary administrative and organizing powers, has been eminently successful. He has been instrumental in forming out of the district assigned to St. George's under the Act of William the Fourth two new parishes, constituted vicarages under the Leeds Vicarage Act.

The witness withdrew.

Adjourned.

Tuesday, 19*th June* 1849.

LORD ASHLEY in the Chair.

The Reverend HENRY RAIKES, a member of the Commission and Chancellor of the diocese of Chester, examined: *Rev. Henry Raikes.* 19th June 1849.

1336. ARE there any peculiar usages in the diocese of Chester relating to the appointment of churchwardens?—Yes, there are some; but they are really more subjects of antiquarian inquiry than of practical usefulness in consideration. I am only aware of anything very peculiar with regard to two great parishes, Astbury and Stockport. In those two parishes the churchwardens have been appointed from time immemorial by individuals who bear the title of "Posts;" in other words, they are the præpositi peculiares. In the parish of Astbury there are eight of these; they are the owners of several old halls in the parish.

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Rode Hall for the township of Odd Rode is one; old Moreton Hall for the township of Moreton Odd Rode, Moreton Hall for Moreton, Somerford Hall for the township of Somerford Radna, Eaton Hall for the township of Eaton, and Davenport Hall for the township of that name. Out of the parish there is Brereton Hall, now in the parish of Brereton, which probably was a parish taken from Astbury in former days. And besides these seven, the representatives of the several halls, the mayor of Congleton for the time being is likewise a "post." These gentlemen meet together on one particular day, and appoint churchwardens; and the churchwardens, under their direction, lay the rate and collect the rate; and the rates in that parish, as well as in Stockport, go by the name of *mises*, probably derived from the old French word *mise*. In Astbury, which is a parish well inhabited, with a good many respectable landowners residing in it, this mise is regularly raised; and the rate is carried on without any difficulty. In consequence of this, Astbury church, one of the finest churches in the county, or perhaps in England, is kept in a very excellent state of repair. With regard to Stockport, the principle is similar, but the state of things is very different. There are there four posts, the representatives of four estates in the neighbourhood; and these posts have been accustomed, I think, to nominate as churchwardens those who, generally speaking, were the agents of the families; and the churchwardens thus nominated, used to lay the rate, which, with some exceptions of favoured lands, extended over the whole of the parish. Stockport has now, as the Commissioners are aware, become a town, with a very large manufacturing population. A considerable part of the parish, at least of the country surrounding the town, is covered with mills and bleaching grounds, and the consequence is that the character of the population is very materially altered. Properties have changed hands, old usages have become obsolete, and the churchwardens no longer find it possible to raise a rate. In consequence of this, at the visitation that I attended about a month ago, when I went round to admit the churchwardens, the four gentlemen who had filled the office of churchwarden, nominated by the posts, employed one of their number to tender their resignation. That gentleman stated that they could collect no money; that the refusal to pay the rate was become general; that the posts were unwilling to compel the payment, and in consequence that the current expenses of the great parish of Stockport were thrown on them as individuals; and that it was a burden which they could not undertake. He added, that the posts, the owners of the estates by whom they were appointed, refused to be responsible; and they had, as agents for those estates, felt that they were not justified in continuing to support a burden which ought either to be borne by the proprietors of the estates, or by the parish at large, and therefore they tendered their resignation. I was obliged to tell them that I had no power to accept their resignation; that I regretted the difficulty in which they were placed; that I could only beg them to appeal to the persons by whom they were appointed, hoping that, being possessed of the estates which had hitherto discharged the office, they would still continue to contribute to the current expenses of the parish. I am afraid that the state of things in Stockport is so unfavourable to the levying or carrying of a church rate that I hardly know what the result can be; and I fear that the church must be supported, just as its current expenses have been hitherto supported, by the voluntary contribution of a few who are attached to the church, or from the income of the rector. With these few exceptions, I think that the churchwardens in the diocese of Chester are elected much as the churchwardens are elected in other parts of England; and perhaps it is only worth while to report these peculiarities in order that the Commissioners might be aware of the extent to which these ecclesiastical peculiarities prevail in the northern part of England, and thus see that there are difficulties sometimes so very peculiar that the remedies suggested as expedient in the South would not be applicable in the North.

1337. To what extent do they prevail; you have only mentioned two places?—I think those are the only two places where there is that peculiar phraseology prevailing which gives the title of "posts" to the persons appointing, or where there is any peculiarity in the nomination of churchwardens. In those cases a vestry is not called for the appointment of churchwardens; but the appointee is nominated as a privilege by the holder of the estate in that neighbourhood.

1338. In what way, or to what extent, are the church rates at present collected?—In the towns the collection of church rates varies with circumstances. The clamour and opposition of the partisans and persons opposed to a church rate in some places is so strong, that the general collection is not attempted. In the country parishes rates are laid and are raised much as in the other parts of England. But in the towns the churches are maintained by what they call a voluntary rate, which in fact is a subscription from the leading members of the congregation. I am afraid there are several places in Cheshire and in Lancashire where the churchwardens would be unwilling to propose a rate, or at least where they would venture to attempt carrying it out to the full extent to which the law extends. Therefore we are in that unhappy predicament, that while the law authorizes and sanctions the rate, we see that the law is set at nought, and we are unable to avail ourselves of the power which we conceive to be our right. I might mention that I think there was a time, about six or eight years back, when the reaction after that sort of fever of dissent that broke out led the people to think more calmly of the violence into which they had been betrayed, and when, I think a modified system of church rates, limiting the items charged to the maintenance of the church fabric

fabric, and separating it from all idea of the abuses which had been practised in former times, might perhaps have been acceptable. The opportunity, I fear, has been lost; and I now hardly see how that which is in truth the legal provision for the maintenance of the Church can be carried into effect in such places as these to which I have alluded.

1339. What modification in the character or form of laying these rates might, in your opinion, be attempted?—I think that an advantageous alteration might be made if a distinction were observed in the church rates between those expenses which are incidental, and which I might call annual and current expenses, and which support the church services or trifling repairs, and those which are of a larger nature. It seems a hard thing if a church is to be repaired or rebuilt, that the expenses should be defrayed by a rate on the inhabitants at the time being. Many of these inhabitants are probably tenants whose leases may be nearly expiring, and in that way they may be burdened during the few remaining years of their lease with the whole expense of a restoration which shall exonerate the parish from any outlay for two or three hundred years. I think if there was a distinction of this kind made in the rates, and that some were made payable by the landowner, and some by the occupant or by the tenant, that one cause of offence would be obviated; and that sometimes there might be a chance of carrying, without much difficulty, a rate that would otherwise be met with an overwhelming opposition. When I first entered on the duties of the office which I have the honour to hold, I found that in many cases the church rates were paid out of the poor's rates. It was a very easy and convenient way of collecting the money; but it was illegal, and I was therefore obliged to remind the churchwardens that they could not avail themselves of that facility. In that way the endeavour to lay a rate in a legal form, and not to borrow it, as they used to do, from the poor's rate, has in some cases added to the difficulty of collecting it. Much, however, depends, as might be expected, with regard to success in carrying a rate, on the character of the individual clergyman. If a strong feeling is excited in his favour, if the people are conscious that there is no abuse intended or likely to be tolerated, if they are led to take an interest in the church by the benefits they derive from its ordinances, they naturally are more willing to subscribe; and therefore in some cases we meet with rather extraordinary instances of liberality, while on the other hand we are sometimes met by instances of very determined opposition. I would also add that the collection of rates would be facilitated if one uniform rate of assessment prevailed. In our large northern parishes the rate is often divided among the different townships, and the township in which all the wealth is concentrated pays no more towards the general amount than the township which is scantily provided with the means of meeting the charge.

1340. In what way will the want of church rates operate?—The want of church rates will operate very severely on our newly built churches, particularly on those which are now being built on the districts formed under Sir Robert Peel's Act. In those cases the districts are usually formed out of large and populous parishes where the church rate has become obsolete, and where the people have never in consequence been accustomed to pay for the maintenance of the church fabric; and yet there are no other resources within the reach of the incumbent and churchwardens by which the fabric can be maintained. If any means could be adopted by which those churches could be supported at present, in the course of five or ten years an interest might be excited which would induce the inhabitants of a district to come forward themselves, and contribute for the incidental repairs and for the supply of the necessary articles. At present, in some cases, these churches are placed in a district involved in a kind of heathenism, where there is a total absence of any feeling favourable to the Church, and where of course it is very difficult to obtain anything in the way of contributions towards the maintenance of the church. On the occasion of my last visitation I was appealed to by the wardens of a church built in Whitehaven under these circumstances. They stated that the district is entirely occupied by small cottages tenanted by colliers employed in the mines; men who for a long time have been completely neglected and lost to all means of religious improvement, and who of course view the new church without any partiality or attachment. The church is new, but windows are occasionally broken, and little repairs are continually required, and they have no means at their disposal for meeting these expenses. The clergyman receives the stipend allotted to him by the Act, of 150*l.* a year; but that is the whole amount of his receipts. All the pews and sittings were declared to be free and unappropriated, and therefore there is no resource whatever for the maintenance of the fabric. If, in reference to what has been already stated before this Commission, permission was granted to the incumbents of those churches in Sir Robert Peel's districts to lay, under the direction or sanction of the bishop, a rent on some of the sittings, it might then be possible to find means for the maintenance of the fabric, or at least to answer its incidental repairs; but at present it is hardly possible to draw from a careless or an alienated population the funds that are needed. If the building is incomplete, decay may begin without any process at hand for checking it.

1341. Is not a repair fund very common?—I was glad to see that the Bishop of Ripon has made in his diocese a rule with the Church Building Society that there should be a repair fund of ten per cent. in the churches built. Under the Act of William the Fourth, there is a reservation there of five per cent. on the cost; and, inconsiderable as that is as a repair fund, it still will meet the current charge for broken windows and trifles of that kind. But in the case of those churches that have been built in the Peel districts they have generally been built by persons who have obtained the nomination in consideration of building the church, and there has been no condition annexed.

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1342. Is there no repair fund in that case?—There is none regularly claimed; the patronage is sometimes given simply on the condition of building the church, without any mention of a repair fund.

1343. You have a church rate at Liverpool, have you not?—Yes; but the circumstances under which it is paid are peculiar.

1344. Have you a church rate in Manchester?—Yes; but in collection it is little more than a voluntary rate; the rate is laid, but not universally collected. The rate at Liverpool is collected; but, unless I mistake, it is not laid as other rates are. At Liverpool the expenses of the two parish churches are borne by the parish and by a rate levied for that purpose. According to an arrangement between the parties, the corporation undertook certain municipal expenses, and the parish undertook the expense of the parish churches, and of Saint John's church. Five churches in Liverpool are maintained by the corporation, the rest by repair funds. The Peel district churches in consequence feel the separation from the parish church to be an evil, as they no longer share in the parochial funds.

1345. In how many towns in the county of Lancaster should you say that this discontinuance of a church rate has taken place?—I should say, that in some of the most populous towns they are virtually discontinued. At Wigan a rate has been carried for the restoration of their noble church, and the same thing has been done at Sandback, but in each case it has been aided by very liberal subscribers. The Commissioners have seen described in the papers the scene that took place at Rochdale.

1346. Can you suggest anything that might facilitate the object originally proposed to be answered by the rate?—Perhaps I shall almost seem to have anticipated my answer in what I have said before, that if in those churches that have been built under Sir Robert Peel's Act permission was given to let pews or sittings, in that way means might be obtained for getting the Church afloat among the people; and when once afloat among the people, when they have once become attached to it, a kind of parochial interest is established; and then I should think, that, as far as the maintenance of the fabric went, it might be possible to have a rate laid with the probability of the rate being carried. But you must get your church planted in the affections of the people before the people, in the present state of the law, or rather in the present state of public feeling, will consent to bear the imposition of a rate to maintain it.

1347. Can you suggest anything as to the general subject of the subdivision of parishes?—It strikes me that the objects on which we have been hitherto employed, important as they unquestionably are, have been aimed rather at ameliorating the position of the clergy themselves, than of improving the condition of the people. The arrangements which have been suggested will have a tendency to set at rest many causes of difference between the incumbent and the ministers of districts or chapels, and several points which have led to jealous feelings and prejudices may probably be settled by conclusions under recommendations from the Commission. But I still feel that comparatively little will have been done for the people, unless we are able to recommend further advances with regard to the subdivision of parishes for spiritual purposes. And if it were not exceeding the limits of the duty of the Commission, I think it would be an important thing if we could enunciate some great fact as to the number of persons that ought to be entitled to individual spiritual superintendence. And if the principle was laid down, not merely that there should be a resident clergyman in every parish, but that a certain number of persons should also have some individual connected with them, watching over them for good, and endeavouring to lead and direct them, and that wherever the income of the parish supplied the means, that the incumbent should be bound to supply a man; or, if there was a want of means, that still the bishop should have the power of urging according to circumstances, the appointment of an additional curate, to be paid or salaried from other sources that might hereafter arise. I think in that way we should make a very important step in advance. It has been stated before to be the principle of the parochial system, that every sheep should have a fold, and that every fold should have a shepherd; but flocks may be so numerous that one shepherd is not sufficient. In the Prussian churches I understand that whenever the population of a parish exceeds 750, the incumbent is permitted to apply to the minister for religious instruction, and to have an assistant supplied him by the Government. If we were to state that 2,000 persons in a parish should be considered as requiring the superintendence of one man, leaving of course to the bishop of the diocese to take into consideration the circumstance that might sometimes dispense with the necessity,—for it might be possible that there should be 2,000 or even 10,000 Roman Catholics in a parish, who would of course be out of the reach of the regular parochial ministry,—still, if it was supposed that wherever 2,000 persons, nominally members of the Church of England, or at least within reach of the Church of England, were found existing, that one clergyman should be appropriated to them as a kind of provisional curate, bound to minister to them, and among them, and among them alone, I think in that way there would be a kind of separation of the masses formed, a sort of commencement of arrangement in our people. That would be a great immediate benefit, and a most important commencement for the future and final subdivision of our parishes. We have always found in the diocese of Chester that unless there had been a previous work going on, the building of a new church seldom answers satisfactorily. We have always found that those churches have filled best, and answered best, where there had been a licensed schoolroom, or some similar operation at work in the district; so that when a church was built, we were able to turn into it a congregation already

already formed, and accustomed to the services of the Church of England, and panting for a little more of space, and a little more pure air, than they had before. Those places have succeeded the best. I think, if, from any suggestion originating in this Commission, that sort of principle was to be laid down, that our larger parishes should be subdivided with regard to the population, and provisional curates appointed to separate portions, you would then have the commencement of a work which hereafter might be proceeded on more completely. Of course consideration must also be had, in the subdivision of parishes, to the size of the churches already existing; and in those cases where there are churches holding 2,000 or 2,500, the population attached to them must be very much larger. It might be convenient to reach that population by means of additional curates acting together round a common centre. When, however, the population exceeded the number that could be collected in the church, it might be desirable to form them into separate masses, and by licensed schoolrooms or temporary buildings to endeavour to induce something of a parochial spirit.

1348. You think it desirable, previously to the establishment of a church, that some movement should be made within the population to prepare the congregation who might desire to have a church?—Decidedly.

1349. Might it be advisable, in case a certain sum were raised, say 5,000*l.* or 6000*l.*, to postpone raising a church for a year or two, and to devote the interest of that money to the maintenance of some religious services in the mean time?—I should be very much disposed to think so. First, in that way you may collect people more easily. They come in their ordinary clothing. There may then more easily be an adaptation of the services to their peculiar circumstances; and expository lectures may be introduced for those who are most ignorant, assuming the character of domestic instruction, and adapted to their capacity. In fact, you may begin conversion there; and afterwards, when the people are awakened, enlightened, and in some sense converted, it will then be possible to collect them. But until they have been brought to something of a sense and feeling of religion, they look at the church with indifference, unless from early education or early associations they have a feeling that way, and scarcely ever go to it.

1350. Have you found instances where, as matter of mere economy or finance, it has been found desirable to create a fund within, before it was supplied from without; that is to say, where large contributions have been collected from a district which has been so agitated previously by spiritual ministrations, and which would never have emanated from that district if such previous agitation had not taken place?—I think that I could reply to that question decidedly in the affirmative; and I have no doubt that in many cases a spirit would be so stirred up that efforts from without might be met by efforts within. I might mention as an illustration a church that was built in the neighbourhood of Manchester where we had great difficulty in raising the funds, and the incumbent came one day and brought 30*l.*, and he said, "This, I think, might be looked upon as a contribution such as you have never had "before. I can venture to say of this 30*l.*, that there is not a shilling that did not cost the "man who gave it a meal," Meaning that it had been the result of great privation undergone by his people wishing to contribute to a work in which they were interested. The difficulty is, no doubt, to excite an interest. Our people have been accustomed always to have a church provided for them, and they have no thought of contributing to the erection of that church. To them, therefore, it is a novel thing. Dissenters, from the nature of their position, are more used to it; but members of the Church of England have always been taught to look on the church as provided by the state, and to imagine its services gratuitous. In the districts of which I speak, the inhabitants have not been accustomed to the payment of church rate, and they imagine that under no circumstances could they be called upon to contribute to it; but I have no doubt, from various cases which have come within my knowledge, that as soon as the feeling was excited they would be found ready to come forward.

1351. If I understand you rightly, you would form a district, and provide a spiritual instructor, previously to a church being built?—Yes; because I feel that it is hopeless to expect to get the church built first.

1352. You lay this down as a general law. You would not say that it would be invariably necessary?—I only mean this: I think your great object is to save the people. If you could build a church immediately, do it; but we all know the immense difficulty of building churches in those districts. And the difficulty of raising funds is such, that I fear we must be content for a long time to be satisfied with building a very inferior kind of churches, and, in fact, to collect our people where we can, and as we can, and be satisfied if we can collect them at all. I mean that those churches succeed the best where there has been spiritual instruction given previously; and this prevails in the manufacturing districts. A man was appointed, under Sir Robert Peel's Act, to a populous district at Stockport; he told me he had been employed as a missionary among the Maroons in the West Indies, and he had been employed as chaplain on a railway, and he never had been exposed, he thought, to personal danger, except among the people of his district.

1353. You have instanced Stockport; you have known Stockport for many years, have you not?—Yes.

1354. Are you aware that for a great many years, with an enormously increasing population, there was scarcely any accommodation for the poor in the churches?—It is perfectly true.

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1355. And the parish church was entirely occupied by large aristocratic pews?—Just so.

1356. And there was but one chapel of ease when the population exceeded 40,000?—Yes; the chapel of St. Peter's.

1357. And only two clergymen at that time; thirty or forty years ago?—Just so.

1358. So that the population was entirely neglected, as far as the Church was concerned?—Most lamentably so.

1359. And the poor population was left in the charge of the dissenters?—Yes.

1360. You had to create a church feeling?—Yes. The result at Stockport was, that when at last the State interfered, and built that beautiful church of St. Thomas's, to hold 2,500, the Commissioners forgot there had been no preparation in the minds of the people; and the church has never filled to the present day; and at present, with a very respectable man officiating as minister, the church is still comparatively empty.

1361. It is your opinion, that in the parishes, especially in the North, preparation work is very important?—Most important.

1362. With reference to your opinion as to the advantage of planting a clergyman amongst the population, and exciting a church feeling, before you build a church, you are aware that under Sir Robert Peel's Act the Ecclesiastical Commissioners will always constitute a district among a dense population, provided the endowment is found from another source?—Yes.

1363. Supposing you had a sufficient sum placed at your disposal for such an endowment, and at the same time an equal sum for a church, would you not rather constitute two districts with that money, than constitute one district, and build a church within it?—Yes, certainly.

1364. Are you not of opinion, that the subdivision of parishes, and the multiplication of ministers, will tend very much to create that feeling of which you have spoken?—No doubt of it; but chiefly through the multiplication of ministers.

The Right Reverend the Lord BISHOP OF WINCHESTER examined.

Bishop of Winchester.

1365. WHAT is your lordship's opinion generally as to the best mode of dealing with large populations, by placing the responsibility of a given number upon one or two clergymen, or giving to one clergyman the management of a large number, with individuals under him, to whom he may delegate what authority he pleases?—According to my own experience I should say that it would be most desirable for the spiritual interests of the poor population that the system of individual responsibility should be adopted; that is to say, that the care of a manageable district should be placed under a particular individual, that individual being responsible only to the ordinary ecclesiastical jurisdiction.

1366. You would not go beyond one clergyman and his curate in charge of a given population?—That is a question which I can scarcely answer without some qualification, because it is obvious that it is utterly impossible in the present state of things to assign districts according to any definite and specific model. If there were a large district the population of which was concentrated within moderate limits, I should not say that it would be always desirable to subdivide that district into such minute proportions, as otherwise I might think it desirable to place under a single individual. I think it might conduce to the harmony of pastoral superintendence if a population so circumstanced were placed under the charge of one individual, supposing the district not so large as to be quite unmanageable.

1367. Will you be kind enough to give an approximate estimate of the number of population which you think might be treated in that manner without subdivision?—In a town population I think 4,000 or 5,000, supposing there were means for employing curates in proportion to the amount of the population.

1368. Do not you think that 4,000 should be the limit of the number for the incumbent and his curate?—I assume that there might be any number of curates. I have many parishes with populations exceeding 4,000 or 5,000, each of them very well managed by the incumbent and his curates. In a rural population I need scarcely say that a much smaller number ought to be assigned to one individual from the greater acreage that he would have to traverse.

1369. Have you considered the state of the population in many of the large parishes in the diocese of which you are patron, and have you formed any plan for a better arrangement when an opportunity shall offer?—My principle would be, where the revenues of a living were sufficient, to assign such a portion to the several churches as would assist in supplying spiritual superintendence for the whole population so subdivided; and, to a certain extent, I have acted upon that principle as opportunity has offered.

1370. Have you considered the condition of the living of St. Mary's, Southampton, of which you are patron?—The increase of the population in the parish of St. Mary's, Southampton, is such as to require any subdivision of income which can fairly be made, looking at the position which the parish of St. Mary's occupies in so important a town as Southampton.

1371. Has

1371. Has your lordship considered the condition of the living of Alresford with the view to any future arrangement should an opportunity occur?—I am not aware of any other alteration which might be desirable in the living of Alresford than that of separating the outlying parish of Medstead from the benefice.

1372. So as to bring what remains within a more manageable compass?—The population of the whole parish of Alresford as now constituted is not so large as to be unmanageable by the rector.

1373. Does it lie over a very large surface?—In point of acreage perhaps it may be said to do so, but the population is very much concentrated. My reason for desiring to separate Medstead from Alresford would be the application of the general principle to which I have already adverted. I think that the responsibility is better in the hands of an individual on the spot than under the superintendence of a comparatively distant rector.

1374. And has your lordship any counsel or advice to give generally to the Commissioners upon the subject which they have before them?—I very much doubt whether there is anything that I can add which has not been already presented to the Commission. I shall be very ready to answer any questions, but I believe the Commissioners have already had before them those who are quite as competent as myself to give information.

1375. The worst case under your lordship's jurisdiction is St. George's, Southwark, is it not?—I am scarcely prepared to say that in the present state of St. George's, Southwark, it is so; indeed I think that the parish about which I have just been questioned, that of St. Mary's, Southampton, in its present state is worse than St. George's, Southwark, imperfectly constituted in respect of spiritual superintendence as is the latter.

1376. There is a greater number, 50,000 people, in St. George's, Southwark, is there not?—Yes; but upon the whole I should say that those 5,0000 people, or a large proportion of them, are more adequately supplied with spiritual instruction than the mass of the population in St. Mary's, Southampton.

1377. Partly by dissenters, is it not?—I had under consideration in my answer merely the agency of our own church.

1378. Until very lately they had but one church?—I am speaking of its present state. At present I have reason to know that there are very few parts of that parish which are not to a certain extent visited either by the clergy or by scripture readers.

1379. Still your lordship will feel that a great deal requires to be done?—Yes, a great deal indeed.

1380. Your lordship will remember the fact of Mr. Bowen having had to administer baptism to hundreds when he first went to St. Mary's?—I remember the fact; and the same thing has been done yet more recently in other parishes much smaller in size than St. George's, Southwark. In a neighbouring parish a larger number than were baptized at one time by Mr. Bowen were baptized within the last few months by the incumbent. I consider that this is owing in a great degree to more assiduous pastoral visiting, rendered possible by subdivision of districts and by the agency of the scripture readers.

1381. Are there many instances in Southampton in which subdivision is required?—Yes; there are some parishes in Southampton and many in other parts of my diocese which require subdivision at present, but there are very great difficulties in subdividing town parishes; for instance, the difficulty of finding sites either for schools or churches, a difficulty which in some districts has hitherto been found to be really insurmountable. I have two districts in my mind at this moment in which, after the most careful inquiry throughout the whole of their limits, no space has been found where I can either plant a school or a church.

1382. What would be your lordship's idea as to the best means of constituting such districts, provided pecuniary and physical means were available; what amount of population would you attach to a church, and what establishment?—I should think in cases of that kind that the amount of population assigned to a particular church ought not to exceed 4,000; I should prefer 3,000.

1383. Have the divisions which have already been effected in your lordship's diocese in Southwark been productive of good?—I can scarcely speak too strongly of the great good that has been effected by them. I should be afraid of being thought to use the language of exaggeration if I spoke as strongly as I think I might speak in reference to the advantage which has been obtained.

1384. You would feel justified in saying that the contrast which Southwark presents now as compared with what it was some few years ago is very satisfactory?—The experience of the last year has satisfied me that no work in which I have ever been engaged has been so useful as that of endeavouring to effect better spiritual superintendence in Southwark.

1385. I presume the Commissioners may have the satisfaction of knowing that they have your lordship's entire approval and countenance in the object they have in view?—Entirely so; to the utmost extent to which it may be practicable to carry into execution the objects of the Commission.

1386. What are the limitations that you would suggest from your experience?—I should very much deprecate any plan which proceeded on what I should call a Procustes system.

Bishop of Winchester.

19th June 1849.

I have a strong opinion that no great amount of good will be obtained except by treating each case individually. If commissioners were appointed, invested with powers analogous to those possessed by the Tithe Commissioners or the Copyhold Commissioners, they might be enabled to deal with the several parishes requiring subdivision, having respect in each case to its own specific local difficulties. No general rule will apply universally. The principle must be adapted in the best manner which is practicable to overcome the obstacles which present themselves, and produce the greatest amount of good in a given district.

1387. Can you mention any instance in your diocese where subdivision is impeded by the operation of local Acts?—I have a very important parish in my diocese in which church extension has been materially impeded by local Acts of Parliament professedly passed to promote church extension; private Acts by which particular chapels have been erected.

1388. Do you think it desirable then that wherever local Acts exist, powers should be given to render available the facilities already provided by the Church Building Act, notwithstanding the obstruction by local difficulties?—I should think it desirable, but I doubt very much whether it would be practicable. I doubt very much whether legal authorities would give their sanction to any measure of that kind. It is a subject upon which I have conversed very much with eminent legal men. I have had a great desire to see some Act introduced which would over-ride all these local Acts, but it was the opinion of the legal persons whom I consulted, both ecclesiastical and common lawyers, that it would be utterly hopeless to expect that Parliament would give effect to any law which should have so great and unknown an effect. It is impossible beforehand to know what is contained in the various local Acts, which are very numerous, and if some general Act were passed to supersede their provisions a great deal of mischief might be done in endeavouring to remove existing impediments.

1389. Does not Sir Robert Peel's Act ride over many Acts or what may be termed legal obstructions?—It rides over what may be termed legal obstructions, but it does not interfere with private and local Acts. It is impossible without repealing or modifying many of the existing clauses in public Acts of Parliament to effect any general measure of church extension.

1390. Is your lordship of opinion that it is desirable to have some general enactment which shall over-ride those provisions of local Acts, the operation of which is calculated to obstruct the subdivision of large parishes?—It would be highly desirable if it were practicable, but I need scarcely state that such a clause would most materially interfere with many vested interests. There are many individuals who have a legal property secured by Act of Parliament which such clause would materially affect. The result would be desirable, but it is very questionable whether it can be attained in the way supposed.

Adjourned.

Tuesday, 26th June 1849.

The ARCHBISHOP OF YORK in the chair.

Rev. John Garbett.

26th June 1849.

The Reverend JOHN GARBETT, Rector of Saint George's, Birmingham, examined.

1391. You are the incumbent of Saint George's, Birmingham?—Yes.

1392. What is the population of your parish?—I think it is about from 12,000 to 14,000.

1393. Have you any district in that parish?—There was a district, now Saint Stephen's parish, taken out of it about four or five years ago, under Sir Robert Peel's Act. The population was 25,000 previously.

1394. Is that the only subdivision that there is?—It is.

1395. Is a church built in that district?—Yes, and spacious schools.

1396. And in full operation?—Yes.

1397. How many persons have you left in your parish now?—I think about 14,000; I cannot say positively. The population has never been taken separately in the parishes of Birmingham.

1398. Do you think it desirable that your parish as it now exists should be further divided?—It might bear one more division. I do not think that more than one more division would be desirable under existing circumstances.

1399. What proportion of the population would you take off from that 14,000 now under your charge?—It might be pretty equally divided.

1400. You think 7,000 not too many for one clergyman to have the care of?—This depends upon his assistants and resources. It involves so many questions as not to be brought

brought under one universal rule. You may in certain localities have means of visiting a considerable number much more easily than a much smaller number in other localities. It is impossible to lay down any rule; as the income of the benefice, the facilities for attaining helps, the nature of the population, &c., have all to be taken in view before you can decide whether the mere reduction of a parish will promote the spiritual good of the people.

1401. You say distinctly, with regard to your parish, containing 14,000, that even if there were abundant means of doing it you would not wish it to be further divided than by constituting one more division, making two equal parishes, as far as might be, with 7,000 persons in each?—If you have "abundant means" a larger separation would be eligible, but unless you can make an adequate provision for the clergymen, and not impoverish the mother church, which is poorly endowed, I do not think it is desirable.

1402. Do you mean by an adequate provision—an adequate pecuniary provision?—I do.

1403. What do you think an adequate pecuniary provision for a clergyman having the charge of several thousand persons?—I think in a place like Birmingham you ought not to give a cure of souls, unless you provide some means of discharging its responsibilities; you should secure at the least 300*l.* a year net and certain. I have had a good deal of experience of the necessities of clergymen, nominally placed at the head of poor parishes, but unsupplied with means of sustaining respectability, much less of meeting claims; and I am satisfied that it would be not only not beneficial, but injurious to the interests of religion to put clergymen there without the power of meeting their position, and of exercising their functions adequately.

1404. Supposing we had the power of assigning such an income to each clergyman, would you not think it then desirable that your parish should be divided into at least three parishes?—Certainly. But there are also other elements which enter into these questions. I think the dividing parishes is a grave thing, requiring care especially to avoid, where it can be done, forming parishes into separate classes, as has been recently the case in many instances. I have had a great deal to do with respect to dividing Birmingham into districts; and whilst the result has been in many cases excellent, in others you have now certain ecclesiastical districts where the population is well nigh entirely poor. And by these and similar divisions you sever the rich, or persons possessed of fair means, completely from the poor, which I think is undesirable; and my conviction arises from actual observation. I did not feel this until experience sadly forced it upon my notice.

1405. That must depend, must it not, entirely upon local circumstances; it happens sometimes that all the poor are together?—This will be often much the case in large towns, and hence the need of not extending it by arbitrary divisions of mere population. The Commissioners are aware that of late years society has undergone a great change; merchants, professional men, manufacturers, and respectable tradesmen remove out of the towns, and live in the suburbs; they leave the towns, in a great degree, to the poor. A division of parishes which should sever the masses of utterly poor from those with whom they ought to have a connexion is very undesirable, and, though sometimes unavoidable, ought never to take place where it may be avoided.

1406. Do the Commissioners understand you to say that you think the evil which would arise from having a district constituted exclusively of the poor would counterbalance the good that would be derived from more careful and particular pastoral superintendence?—I should say that it is so undesirable, that the counter-benefit ought to be very great. Effective pastoral superintendence I can scarcely sever from the aid of the laity; and such aid, in totally poor parishes, is out of the question. I think it a doubtful good, certainly.

1407. If the poor and the rich could be fairly mixed together in a district, would you not then think it an advantage, supposing the means were forthcoming?—Undoubtedly. No one feels more strongly the benefit of efficient pastoral superintendence, provided it be really so; few have done more to promote it. The Commissioners are aware that in the manufacturing districts, with regard to great numbers of the poor, you cannot get at them, except at brief or very uncertain intervals; they are not accessible. The population is also constantly moving, and it is impossible to keep up what may be called anything like the same spiritual and pastoral superintendence as it is in smaller parishes.

1408. Of course it must be more difficult in a large mass of people than in a comparatively small one?—It is difficult in either case, arising from their engrossing cares and labours.

1409. Are you not of opinion, supposing such districts were constituted and churches built, that the incumbents of those churches should be wholly independent, and not under the control in any way of the incumbent of the mother church?—I think so, generally. Certainly in nine cases out of ten it would be very desirable; although, in fact, the casting of the burden of souls from rich parishes to needy pastors has had an opposite effect.

1410. How many curates have you?—Two.

1411. Yourself and two curates for 14,000 people?—Yes. There are, however, a scripture reader, and a large number of voluntary district visitors.

1412. Your parish is a new one, is it not?—It was formed in the year 1830.

1413. Is it what is called a district parish?—It was formed under the first Church Building Act, the original parish of St. Martin's being divided into four separate and distinct parishes, viz., St. Martin's, St. George's, St. Thomas's, and All Saints.

 1414. Yours

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1414. Yours is a separate and distinct parish?—Yes.

1415. Is all Birmingham included in what may be called the parish of Birmingham?—No; Birmingham proper does not include the whole of the town of Birmingham; a great part of it is in the adjoining parish of Aston, which is, perhaps, the most pressing case for division of any parish in that part of the kingdom.

1416. When you say that it would be desirable that a clergyman in Birmingham, having a considerable charge under him, should have an income of 300*l.* a year, do you mean by that an income of 300*l.* a year, exclusive of pew rents?—Yes; and exclusive of house rent, which is generally very high. I place that as the minimum; and I think it ought not to depend upon the letting of the pews, which is already far more precarious than it was, and becomes more uncertain continually.

1417. Does your income depend upon the letting of the pews?—It does, to the extent of more than one half. The more you increase the parishes, the more you diminish pew rents. In any extensive division of parishes you must not depend upon the pew rents.

1418. You are the rural dean of the deanery of Birmingham?—Yes. I beg to lay on the table an ecclesiastical map of Birmingham which was formed by Mr. Harris, a school inspector of the National Society; it might possibly be of use to the Commissioners; and I have marked in a strong line that part belonging to the parish of Aston.

1419. Will you give some of the principal details with regard to the parish of Aston?—It is in fact a large parish of about 14,000 acres, nearly altogether rural, except the extreme part of it, which comes into Birmingham so as to compass it on the east and south, forming a great part of the town, and comprised in the borough. This population is, in many parts, dense; it includes also some of the poorest parts of Birmingham; 30,000 or 40,000 people being congregated in three or four districts of the town. Though there are several churches, there is no cure of souls beyond that of the vicar of Aston, which he exercises personally and by curates, except in one district assigned by the bishop, and another under Sir Robert Peel's Act, both in the part within Birmingham. There are three other churches in most populous districts, but the ministers have no cure of souls therein.

1420. You raise rates in your parish?—No; rates are not raised in Birmingham at all, and have not for some years.

1421. Not in any parish?—Not at all.

1422. With regard to Birmingham, you would not consider that a further subdivision would at all facilitate the raising of rates there?—I do not.

1423. Suppose, for example, a district were taken out of a parish consisting of 4,000 or 5,000 persons, and supposing it constituted a parish for the purpose of raising rates, do you think the people of that parish would be more disposed to raise rates than they are now, in your parish of 14,000, for instance, or in any of the larger parishes?—I conceive, as far as Birmingham is concerned, that church rates are literally extinct.

1424. You attribute that, a good deal, do you not, to long desuetude?—Yes. A new generation has risen up; and although, probably, a rate might be obtained, the price would be too serious; and I doubt whether any clergyman would attempt it. It is nearly twenty years since any rates were raised.

1425. Not probably so long since any attempt was made to raise rates?—An attempt was made eight or ten years ago and it failed; but there really hitherto has been no great difficulty in supporting the churches in Birmingham. At the same time, the fabrics must not be left to voluntary support; the burden is too great. I think if some means could be adopted to keep the fabrics in repair, the other expenses may be provided by voluntary means.

1426. Are the churches supported by the voluntary contributions of a few well-disposed persons, or are they supported by sermons?—They vary. In some places there is a subscription or collections, in other places they are put on the pew rents, and in some by all these means.

1427. How is it in your own church?—Partly on the pew rents, and partly by collections; and though it is a large church, and expensive, seating 2,000 persons, and two thirds free, I have not had much difficulty in meeting the demands; but to keep the fabric in a good state of repair may ultimately be a serious question.

1428 How is it at St. Philip's?—I believe it is met by collections and subscriptions, and nothing on the pew-rents.

1429. Do you mean collections after sermons?—I think none after sermons.

1430. How is it in Aston parish?—They generally have got rates in Aston, though sometimes with difficulty. There is a large rural population, which has overbalanced the opposition.

1431. Have they not any of Sir Robert Peel's parishes in Aston?—One; St. Andrew's Bordesley.

1432. And a church built?—Yes.

1433. What will they do about rates there?—I suppose they will go on in the same way. There is a small fund vested by the society which built the church.

1434. They

1434. They have been made separate, independent, and distinct parishes, but being parts of a parish where rates existed before, there ought not to be any difficulty in raising them?—The Ecclesiastical Commissioners required a sum to be invested for repairs, and it was done.

1435. But I mean for the current expenses every year?—There would be great difficulty in raising a rate, though it might be done.

1436. Will they be included in the general rates?—I presume that is a legal and somewhat difficult question.

1437. There was one very large parish in Birmingham, St. Martin's, prior to the division of your own parish?—Yes, and a smaller one, St. Philip's.

1438. St. Philip's has been divided also?—Recently St. Peter's district has been severed from it, and endowed.

1439. You think that good has resulted from the division?—No doubt of it; great good. Your question refers to the divisions that have been made in Birmingham generally.

1440. But you think that division has gone far enough?—No; St. Martin's, consisting of populous and detached parts, should be divided, and others might advantageously be done. The division of Birmingham is a division of all sorts: Some districts have been formed by the Commissioners for building churches, some by the Ecclesiastical Commissioners, some under Sir Robert Peel's Act, and some by the bishop. The fact is, there is every species of church arrangement in Birmingham; and it might be much more simplified, that those districts might be made parishes, and the whole of them properly endowed, including endowment to the original church, where it has been unable to sustain that diminution of income which division must produce. But I much doubt whether a considerable increase of districts proceeding upon an unvarying rule of three or four thousand persons would be beneficial; and much on this ground,—you cannot do it without completely insulating the poor from the rich, and from those in better circumstances.

1441. Those divisions which have been made you would like to see formed into regular parishes?—Yes, I think so.

1442. Is it desirable that there should be one clergyman, having a number of other clergymen under him?—I do not think it undesirable; a certain number, in certain cases.

1443. So that the superior clergyman should exercise a kind of episcopal jurisdiction?—No, not to that extent; three or four, or something of that kind.

1444. Would your opinion be altered, if episcopacy were increased?—I can hardly say; Birmingham is so different from what would be the case in Yorkshire or Lancashire. It is in acreage a small parish, and the whole extent of it is not above two miles each way. It is therefore no parallel to the cases in the north of England, where parishes are many miles in extent.

1445. What schools are there in your parish?—There are day schools, two infant schools' and Sunday schools. I think there are about from 1,000 to 1,500 children, or there will be. There is a school that I am just opening.

1446. Shall you be able to support those schools adequately with your present staff of clergymen?—I trust so. Though there ought to be frequent visitations on their part, perhaps daily, I do not think it very desirable for clergymen to interfere too much with schools; they ought to visit and examine them, but not to attempt to manage them, or to take the office of a master or mistress upon them.

1447. Have you many rich residents in Birmingham?—They are very much diminished, having mostly removed to the outskirts.

1448. And they are in progress of diminution, are they not?—Certainly.

1449. Should you entertain the same fear of subdividing parishes, in consequence of the separation of classes which is taking place?—I do not think support is mainly dependent upon what may be deemed the rich, but in a great degree upon the better class of shopkeepers, whose shops keep up their connexion with populous parishes, though their families may cease to reside.

1450. But they are going out of the town?—Yes, but not to the extent that the merchants and great manufacturers have gone; they are entirely gone, and the professional men to a considerable degree.

1451. Is not that universally the case in almost all manufacturing towns?—I dare say it is.

1452. If your objection is to prevail, there will be no subdivision at all?—I do not perceive this consequence; but it proves the need of extent as well as population, to form an element of division. Among others I may mention that there is a district in connexion with Bishop Ryder's church; the poulation there is entirely poor, and it was owing as well to the interest connected with that church as to the efforts of an excellent clergyman there that they were able to meet in some degree, and for a time, the wants of the place. Had that district been extended, it would have taken in certain streets of respectable shopkeepers; but that was not done, and there is little else than an unmingled mass of poverty.

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There is another district taken out of St. Martin's parish, and the pressure of poverty there renders pastoral superintendence almost impracticable.

1453. Would they be any worse off than they are now?—I think you could not get the agency that you do get through the shopkeepers and better classes of artizans living there. Where these exist, you can provide resources, and get them to visit; and this is carried on to a considerable extent in Birmingham by district visitors, whose labours have been most exemplary.

1454. You would consider the parish of Edgbaston as much a part of Birmingham as Aston, would you not?—Yes. It is comprised in the municipal borough, and forms one of its wards.

1455. The persons living at Edgbaston are the more wealthy merchants and manufactures, whose warehouses and workshops are in the town?—Yes; they principally reside at Edgbaston, though many in Handsworth, adjoining my own parish, and other suburb parishes.

1456. Though living there, would they not contribute towards religious objects in the neighbourhood?—They do contribute to a certain extent, but generally they do not feel these as they do the local claims which parochial connexion or immediate neighbourhood enforces. There are also the claims of the churches or parishes where they actually reside.

1457. Would they not feel it as much as they do now, if further subdivision took place?—Probably they might, though increased subdivision must have the effect of detaching interests.

1458. Do not the manufacturers consider a warehouse or a working place in a poor district as having a claim upon them?—They ought to do so, and some do. That class is, however, very limited, numbers do not; they profess to give in their own parish. It is a hard task to press obligations; and those alone know this who experience it. There are a few who come forward as they ought to do; I trust the number is increasing; but the claims of necessity, especially spiritual necessity, is very partially recognized.

1459. There are not very large manufactories in Birmingham?—Not to the same extent as in Manchester or other great towns.

1460. What is the population of Bishop Ryder's church division?—About 8,000.

1461. That is entirely poor, is it not?—Almost entirely.

1462. There are great local difficulties to struggle with from the extreme poverty of the people?—There are, though it is not a solitary case.

1463. And great difficulty from the extreme poverty of the endowment?—Yes; 40*l.* a year.

1464. But now under these circumstances schools have been set up there?—Much good has been done there.

1465. A good deal both for local and general charities?—Yes.

1466. In a district entirely poor?—Not in the district, most certainly, but by constant appeals to wealthier quarters.

1467. Would the same resources have been derived out of that poor population if it had been merely under the charge of a curate emanating from some large neighbouring parish?—Probably not, but the resources raised within the district itself have been trivial. It is a striking evidence of the almost insurmountable difficulties of a poor district placed in charge of a ministry without means.

1468. By whom were these schools erected?—Partly by Government grants; considerable sums were also raised by Mr. Collisson, the then incumbent.

1469. Was there anything given from King Edward's school?—The governors of King Edward's school granted the site of the church and schools. They have also one of their elementary schools for the poor there, and they have recently granted a large site for the purpose of an industrial school which is being raised for the benefit of the poor of the town, by the excellent rector of St. Philips, the Hon. and Rev. G. M. Yorke, whose parish is closely connected with Bishop Ryder's district.

1470. If Mr. Collisson, or any incumbent there, instead of having 40*l.* a year had had a fair endowment of 300*l.* a year, would not the local difficulties arising from the poverty of that district have been very much overcome?—Certainly. No doubt, if a competent income were secured, it would meet the objection that exists now against cutting up parishes into poor small districts, and assigning them to clergymen with heavy responsibilities and no means of discharging them. It would also meet in some degree the objection which arises from severing the different classes of society. Still I repeat that in dividing districts consideration should be had not only to the number but to the position of the classes of society, the separation of which a wise legislature ought not to promote.

1471. Still out of 3,000 or 4,000 people, if well attended to by a clergyman having the means of doing something himself, will not resources be found for all local purposes, however poor the people may be, for maintaining schools or local charities?—Abject poverty cannot provide adequate spiritual resources; for instance, expenses of the church, repairs, schools, religious societies, relief of the destitute, and so on. Such a change has taken place, turning

so many houses into warehouses and offices, that is very difficult to legislate in a general way upon a state of society which appears to be changing almost every year. *Rev. John Garbett.* 26th June 1849.

1472. How are your schools supported?—Entirely by local contributions.

1473. Including payments for the children?—Yes.

1474. Do all the children pay?—They do.

1475. The poorest?—With certain exceptions.

1476. Supposing such districts as have been contemplated were constituted, and supposing the minister were sufficiently endowed, schools might probably be erected, but do you think such schools would be supported?—No, I do not think they would. I should rejoice to have more schools in my parish; I could get the money for erecting them to-morrow, but I am satisfied there would be no resources to support them in addition to what we are doing. The efforts of devoted ministers, within my knowledge, have involved them in burdens most distressing to themselves and their parishoners.

1477. In what proportion are your schools self supported?—They cost us from 150*l.* to 200*l.* a year; I do not exactly know the proportion.

1478. What do the children pay per head generally?—They vary; 2*d.*, 3*d.*, and 4*d.* There is one serious fact to be borne in mind respecting charity schools: Like attendance at divine service, they really do not embrace the very lowest classes; the majority in them would be educated, but we have the advantage of giving a better education. Still national education has scarcely yet reached the very lowest ranks; an immense mass of the poorest are left uneducated as much as they ever were. There is, as the Board is aware, an abundance of education in Birmingham. What with King Edward's great foundation, and others, you meet with schools everywhere; but if you go down to the lowest classes, thousands still remain untaught; neither in King Edward's, nor any others, are they met with.

1479. Is that owing to the charge for schooling?—The fact is, that many are in such a poor, wretched, demoralized state, that no avenue was opened for them until the extension of ragged schools, which are more likely to meet their case than anything else.

1480. Do not you pay for some children; for instance, a child comes and pays a penny or two-pence for some time, and trade becomes bad, and the parent cannot pay; do not you pay for them?—Yes.

1481. Does that amount to any large sum?—It does not. From its variety of trades, Birmingham never suffers to the extent that other manufacturing towns do; the population is never entirely thrown out. They greatly help each another; the benevolence of the poor to the poor is as beautiful as it is universal.

1482. Could you state with respect to the parish of Aston the population, the income, and the number of churches in it?—The great bulk of the population is that part which is in the town of Birmingham. In this part are four churches; one endowed, two others merely endowed with a residence, and one in the poorest part, with nothing at all except pew rents.

1483. Do you think that there are 30,000 or 40,000 persons in Birmingham belonging to the parish of Aston?—Certainly. By the last census the population of the parish of Aston was 45,700. It is very dense in some parts.

1484. Except that one district under Sir R. Peel's Act, has no other parish been taken out?—There is a district annexed by the bishop to a church erected by subscription, but there is no endowment except a house. It has thrown upon the clergyman a very heavy burden, and has merely relieved the mother church of a large population, without receiving the slightest benefit in return. In these churches of Aston they do not even marry, nor are the functions of pastors of souls exercised by the incumbents. Some twenty years ago an Act of Parliament was passed for the division of this parish; and I was appointed, with the archdeacon of Coventry and a lay gentleman, by the then bishop of the diocese, Dr. Ryder, as commissioners to assign boundaries for the division, and we did so; but nothing was done. The Act was a temporary Act, and therefore expired, and the parish remains in the same state. It must, however, be noticed that the patronage is entirely private property, and the parties interested are unable to make any great sacrifice; in which respect it differs from many other parishes, and labours under much disadvantage, which will not apply to those parishes that are in public patronage.

AMBROSE BREWIN Esquire examined.

1485. YOU are acquainted with the circumstances of the town of Tiverton in an ecclesiastical point of view, are you not?—Yes; I have lived there for twenty-five years. *A. Brewin, Esq.*

1486. You are acquainted with the peculiarities attending the ecclesiastical arrangements of that town?—Yes. I have a statement which, with the permission of the Commissioners, I will read in the first place,—"Tiverton parish contains, according to the tithe map, 17,650 "acres, and had a population in 1841 of 10,040, (probably now of above 11,000,) of which "7,769 are in the town and 2,271 in the country. It is nine miles in its greatest length, and "seven miles in its greatest width. There are three chapels for the rural population; one at "Cove, five miles distant from the town; another at Chevithorn, about three miles distant;

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" and a third at Withley, three miles distant; the two last recently erected. In the town " there are two churches, viz., St. Peter's (parish church) and St. George's (chapel of ease) " and spacious chapels belonging to several denominations of dissenters (who have been " very active and useful), *all on the eastern side of the Exe.* This river divides the town in " two unequal portions. In West Exe, which contains more than a third of the population, " (and that increasing,) there is no place of worship except the Roman Catholic Chapel." There are, perhaps, not more than a dozen resident Roman Catholics, I think, in the town. " The parish is divided into four 'portions,' viz., Pitt, Clare, Tidcombe, and Priors, and " the district of "All Fours.' The rectors of Pitt, Clare, and Tidcombe, the curate of " Priors, (of which the rectory belongs to King's College, Cambridge, which sends one of " its fellows as curate upon a stipend of, I think, 120*l.* a-year,) have the cure of souls " throughout the whole parish; but, by a *recent* voluntary arrangement of their own, each " of them visits the sick and performs the parochial duties in his own 'portion,' and a " divided fourth part of the town. There is a double duty and evening lecture on the " Sunday at St. Peter's," the parish church, "and daily morning prayers there during the " week, and a double service at St. George's Chapel on Sundays. At Cove Chapel " (attached to Pitt rectory) there is a single service three Sundays of the month, and at the " other two rural chapels (Chevithorn, attached to Tidcombe rectory, and Withley, uncon- " secrated, but in Clare portion), a double service each Sunday." The rector of Pitt is not required to have any service at Cove Chapel on the day when he is on duty at the old church. "The duty at the two churches in the town is performed by monthly rotation as " follows: each of the rectors of Pitt, Clare, and Tidcombe, and the curate of Priors, *in* " *turn* perform on the first Sunday the whole morning and afternoon services at St. Peter's, " and the daily duty throughout the following week. On the next Sunday he has both the " entire services at St. George's chapel; the third Sunday is wholly vacant; and on the fourth " he gives *voluntarily* an evening lecture at the parish church (St. Peter's). Each minister " receives the surplice fees during his week's duty at the parish church; the fees for vaults, " graves, &c., are divided equally among the four. The income and patronage of the three " rectories are as follows, as nearly as I have been able to ascertain, chiefly from recent ad- " vertisements of next presentations to Tidcombe and Clare, which are considered accurate.

" PITT PORTION (with Cove Chapel, five miles off).

	£	s.	d.
Rent-charge	850	0	0
Quarter ditto of All Fours	16	10	0
Glebe, thirty-three acres, say	120	0	0
New church stipend	15	0	0
Surplice fees (one-fourth)	10	0	0
Sundries, if any, not known	—		
	1011	10	0
Rates, &c. not known, say as for Tidcombe	163	5	6
Net	£848	4	6

" Rector, J. Spurway, 1821; aged fifty-seven.

First presentation by Lord Harrowby.
Second presentation by Sir Walter Carew.
Third presentation by Lord Harrowby.
Fourth presentation by Sir Richard Vyvyan.
Fifth presentation by Lord Harrowby.
Sixth presentation by Sir Walter Carew.
Seventh presentation by Lord Harrowby.
Eighth presentation by Mr. Spurway.

Parsonage built by present rector near St. George's Chapel.

" TIDCOMBE PORTION (with Chevithorn Chapel of Ease, three miles off).

	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
Rent-charge				757	0	0
Quarter ditto of All Fours				16	10	0
Glebe, sixty-two acres				117	0	0
New church stipend				15	0	0
Quarter of surplice fees				10	0	0
Sundry investments in funds				29	4	9
				998	14	0
Average yearly poor and highway rates	160	0	0			
Tenths	2	15	6			
Synodals	0	10	0			
				163	5	6
Net				£835	9	3

"Rector, W. Rayer, 1811 ; age sixty-four.
First presentation by Sir W. Carew (sold).
Second presentation by Lord Harrowby.
Third presentation by Mr. Spurway.
Fourth presentation by Lord Harrowby.
Fifth presentation by Sir W. Carew.
Sixth presentation by Lord Harrowby.
Seventh presentation by Sir R. Vyvyan.
Eighth presentation by Lord Harrowby.
A fine parsonage, built by the present rector, with spacious grounds at Tidcombe.

"Clare Portion (Withly Chapel, not consecrated, three miles off, and on the western side of the Exe).

	£	s.	d.
Rent charge	565	0	0
Quarter ditto of All Fours	16	10	0
Manor 121 acres, leased on lives		—	
New church stipend	15	0	0
Quarter share of surplice fees	10	0	0
Sundries in funds	9	2	0
	615	12	0
Average poor and highway rates — 91 0 0			
Tenths and synodals — 2 17 6			
	93	17	6
Net	£521	14	6

"Rector, J. D. Lloyd, 1837 ; age forty-three.
First presentation by Sir W. Carew (sold).
Second presentation by Lord Harrowby.
Third presentation by Sir R. Vyvyan.
Fourth presentation by Lord Harrowby.
Fifth presentation by Sir W. Carew.
Sixth presentation by Lord Harrowby.
Seventh presentation by Mr. Spurway.
Eighth presentation by Lord Harrowby.

No Parsonage house.

"The patronage of every other turn to the three portions was purchased by the late Lord Harrowby in 1818.

"The New Church Act requires a week's duty per month from each rector, and the curate of Priors, and gives them 15*l.* each per annum.

"Priors Portion belongs to King's College, Cambridge, which sends a fellow, who takes similar position and duties with the three resident rectors.

	£.	s.	d.
Their rent charge is	400	0	0
Manor, 172 acres, leased in part ; produce not known		—	
Share of All Fours, surplice fees, and new church stipends.	41	10	0
	£441	10	0"

Those are the simple facts of the livings, which I have requested permission to read. The two points to which I would take the liberty of now speaking are, first, the manifest ineffectiveness and irresponsibility that accompany the system of duty by rotations ; the second is, that although there are two churches in the town, the population is quite sufficient for three ; and West Exe, which contains more than a third of the population, has in it no place of worship except the Roman Catholic chapel.

1487. You spoke of one of the advowsons to be sold?—No; the presentation.

1488. Are they in public patronage, except that belonging to King's College, Cambridge? —The three livings, as to every other turn, belong to Lord Harrowby ; each fourth presentation of the three rectories belong to Sir Walter Carew, one eighth turn to Mr. Spurway, one of the rectors, and one eighth turn to Sir Richard Vyvyan in Cornwall. The lay rectors (the provost and fellows of King's College, Cambridge,) have a fourth portion ; and I have heard it was by them at one time thought that they were not obliged to send a curate at all to Tiverton ; but the New Church Act, as it is termed, though more than 100 years old, fixed them with a part of the parish duty. It is necessary to bear in mind that this same Saint George's Chapel or New Church was built by public subscription, and settled by Act of Parliament (6 Geo. 2. chap. 14.) about the year 1730. This Act specifies that each of the three rectors and the curate of Priors shall in rotation perform the Sunday service

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as chaplain at the new church. The present bishop of Exeter, a few years ago, feeling the unsatisfactory arrangement of the parish in its present state, attempted to get it divided; and some Public Act was passed in which provisions were made with this object; but this Local Act for Saint George's Chapel was not, I believe, repealed or modified, and consequently the bishop's act has remained without effect.

1489. It was a Local Act under which this church was built, was it not?—Yes; but a Public Act although a local one,—the 6th of George the Second, chapter 14; and unless that is dealt with in some way, it is believed impracticable to have any division of the parish. The bishop of Exeter was, at the time alluded to, I think, very anxious to divide it; a good deal was done; and it was thought that his efforts would have carried the point, but it is said to have failed on account of this Local Act.

1490. The clergy are wholly independent of each other, are they not?—Yes, quite independent of each other.

1491. Did you not say, independently of an improved arrangement with respect to the two existing churches, that it would be very desirable to have another church, with a separate cure altogether, established in Tiverton?—Yes.

1492. Do you think that such a church with a new parish would be a blessing to Tiverton?—Yes, if under a faithful earnest minister.

1493. Do you think that persons would be found to attend the church, and support the schools connected with it?—Yes; I believe a third church, with such a minister, and Sunday schools, would be well attended. As regards day schools the town is now well supplied.

1494. What portion of the population would you think it desirable to assign to such a new church and district?—All on the western side of the river Exe, which runs through the town.

1495. That is a natural division, which would be convenient for that purpose?—It would. I beg to observe that if there had not been such very ample provision in a pecuniary point of view for the Established Church at Tiverton, I have reason to believe that before this another church would have been built, and possibly endowed. But it is felt that it would be undesirable to attempt any addition to the endowment of Tiverton, because it is amply sufficient at present; and, as now applied, it does injury to the Church, rather than otherwise. Indeed, so strong is my own opinion upon that point, that I think we should have had more churches in some cases if we had either less church endowment, or a better appropriation of it.

1496. You would desire that it should be a wholly independent church and district?—Quite so, with the best provision that could be made for a faithful earnest ministry.

1497. What is the character of the population on the west side of the river, as to its class?—There is a considerable mixture, but it contains a very large proportion of the working classes, for whom church provision is much wanted.

1498. And, I suppose, some of the higher classes?—Yes.

1499. Do you live in West Exe?—Yes.

1500. Are there any lay agents employed in Tiverton?—Yes; two.

1501. Can you give the Commissioners any information respecting the working of the lay agents?—I think they are very much appreciated, and they have done much good.

1502. On the west side of the town?—One of them. Their visits to the poor have been a great blessing to very many. I think their position in society (if they are truly christian and fit men) makes them often to find access where the clergy would not. I feel a duty individually towards many persons whom we employ, and should willingly co-operate in any satisfactory manner for their real improvement. I have already observed, that it is an earnest faithful ministry that we want; and this system of rotation of itself would prevent any faithful man from an adequate discharge of his duties; it hinders the sympathy which should exist between him and his flock, from the want of connexion between the Sunday ministration and the weekly intercourse; it tends to check or discourage active effort, and to weaken proper influence and sense of responsibility. If a faithful and responsible minister were established there, I am very confident that the Church would greatly increase its influence over the population. There is, I think, generally no indisposition to the Established Church, if its ministrations were faithfully carried out.

1503. Supposing a new district could be formed, and a church built, and the patronage for ever were to be vested in any individual in consideration of ample contributions, do you suppose that individuals would be found to come forward with the prospect before them of having the patronage given to them?—No; for the reason I have adverted to, that there is quite sufficient endowment already. I think that one of the existing rectories taking charge of this new church would be a more perfect cure than the creation of a fresh endowment.

1504. You are of opinion that the prospect of having the patronage of this church in perpetuity would not be sufficient to call forth large contributions upon its erection?—Yes; but I am sure that the church would not be wanting if its patronage were placed in a satisfactory position.

1505. What you desire is to see one of those endowments attached to the new church across the Exe?—Yes. I may say that I have just purchased the next presentation to one of the

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the rectories simply with that hope. I have no family or personal consideration for doing this, further than a wish to have it responsibly exercised. I may say, that the plan of a new district church has crossed my own mind before now, but I think it would be a far better arrangement to attach the church to one of the existing rectories, and get that, trusting to the conscientious exercise of patronage, rather than to create any fresh endowment and office where so many exist.

1506. You say you would attach the church to one of the existing rectories; you do not mean to say that you would not have the incumbent of the church wholly independent?—Surely not; I would put an end to the rotation system.

1507. There are three portionists now with two churches on the east side of the Exe. You would attach one of the endowments to each of those two churches, and take the third endowment and attach it to the new church to be erected in West Exe?—Yes. There would be then three clergymen very sufficiently remunerated for their office, with a responsible sphere of duties to each, and I believe three churches and districts would best suit the present and probable wants of the town.

1508. What is the amount of the income?—It exceeds in gross amount 3,000*l.* a year. If all the lands were in hand, it would be quite 3,500*l.*, but 3,000*l.* is generally considered very ample for such a population.

1509. You would have a church built on the west side of the river, and endowed with one of the four portions?—Yes.

1510. Without such endowment, nobody would subscribe?—As already stated, I think it would be less satisfactory to create a district church in the midst of four such rectories. It would probably be not so endowed as to leave anything like a sufficient income to the clergyman occupying it. A new district church might be built, and endowed with 50*l.* a year or so, and the rest of the income derived from the pew rents; but by the side of three or four rectories, it would not be a pleasant arrangement, or an efficient one. Most of the district churches that have been created have generally been rather deficient in endowments than otherwise, and this would be provided against. We have ample means, if they were well applied; and I think that both the bishop, the clergy, and the parishioners would feel it to be a good arrangement if it were judiciously effected.

1511. It would be a popular thing if the parish could be better divided into districts?—I think so, if under faithful ministers.

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The Reverend CHARLTON LANE, examined.

1512. You are the incumbent of Saint Mark's Kennington, are you not?—Yes.

1513. Yours is a distinct parish?—Yes, it is.

1514. It was a district parish, and at the expiration of twenty years, on the avoidance, it became wholly independent?—There was a district assigned to it, an ecclesiastical district, in the year 1824, when Bishop Otter had it. At the death of Dr. D'Oyly, it became, as far as I can understand the Church Building Act, a separate and distinct parish.

1515. You consider it to be so?—Yes.

1516. And you have the power of raising your own rates, and are exempt from contributing to the support of the mother church?—Yes.

1517. You are a wholly independent incumbent, as much so as the rector of Lambeth himself?—Yes. There are some questions which might be likely to arise with a less amiable rector than the present rector of Lambeth; and I think they should be looked into and obviated, regarding mortuary fees, dues, official appointments, and things of that sort.

1518. Dr. D'Oyly reserved some mortuary fees, did he not?—The Church Commissioners reserved for a number of years, and assigned certain mortuary fees to the rector of Lambeth till the lease should fall in of some glebe property belonging to the rector of Lambeth.

1519. There were four other districts, such as yours, created at the same time, were there not?—Four, in addition to the mother district; Saint Matthew Brixton, Saint Mark Kennington, Saint Luke Norwood, and Saint John Waterloo Road.

1520. Do not you conceive that the creation of those new district parishes has been a great benefit to the parish of Lambeth?—It is impossible to calculate the benefit. I have drawn up a paper, which I should like much to read; it might suggest questions which do not occur to myself: "I would preface my remarks, by requesting it to be understood that "existing interests of a pecuniary nature should, in my opinion, be sacred during existing "incumbencies; and that the clergy of Lambeth are on the most friendly terms with each "other, and with the present amiable rector. When I compare Lambeth with what it was in "1824, at the commencement of which year I became curate to the late excellent Dr. D'Oyly, "and when I think what it might have become but for the arrangements for church accommodation which he achieved, I cannot but feel grateful that so much has been done towards "meeting the immensely growing wants of the population; yet the amount of difficulty "still increasing upon us convinces me that unless the work of subdivision of parishes be

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"carried forward even yet more vigorously, and with some patient attention to what is "called 'minute regulation,' the Church of England must, notwithstanding appearances, "lose her hold upon the affections both of the wealthier and poorer classes. And your "Honourable Board has no prayers more earnest than my own, that the great Head of the "Church may give you all that forbearance and determination which is requisite for your "arduous task. I would humbly venture upon some suggestions; first, with reference to "the all-importance of conciliating the support of the wealthier and more reputable "inhabitants of large parishes towards the promotion of church interests; secondly, with "reference to the social influence of each clergyman in his own sphere:—However small his "pecuniary emoluments, a clergyman should have no additional circumstances hanging "about him, and tending to depreciate his moral influence with poor and rich. Let every "incumbent not only be spiritually the *persona ecclesiæ* in his own pastorhood, free from "all official interference, direct or indirect, on the part of any but his bishop or archdeacon, "but let him feel, and let his parishioners feel, that he alone is the responsible curate for "their spiritual welfare. Let him (where possible) have an endowment, however small, "attached to his cure, and I should not participate in the fear lest the clerical order should "cease to be supplied from that portion of the community which has hitherto sent wealth "and influence into the ministry. With reference to the relative position of the clergy "of a subdivided parish one towards another:—Let all questions concerning the pecu- "niary and official matters be impartially obviated. The wish to preserve for ever the "prestige at present attached to the original church of a parish is natural enough for the "present generation. But the new district is as much part of the original parish as that "in which the mother church is situate. Its own church will, in another generation or "two, have affectionate associations connected with it; the incumbent of that place will "require a decent maintenance, and therefore the pastorhood of the mother district (so "called) should not be benefited to the disparagement of other districts; already, perhaps "from local causes, requiring for their clergy an income often at least equal to that required "for the minister of the original church."

1521. What is the population of your parish?—42,000 at the lowest estimate.

1522. There are 42,000 in your parish?—Yes.

1523. Is there more than one consecrated Church of England place of worship for those 42,000?—Yes, there are two consecrated places; one district church, and one chapelry church.

1524. There is your church first, now a parish church?—Yes; St. Mark's Church, and St. Michael's Chapelry Church, independent of St. Mark's.

1525. St. Mark's is your own?—Yes. I will confine myself to the places of worship in my own district. There are St. Mark's Church, Stockwell Chapel——

1526. That is not consecrated?—No; none of these that I am going to mention are consecrated. Stockwell Chapel was built by one of the archbishops of Canterbury, and the patronage is with the archbishop of Canterbury, the bishop of Winchester, and the rector of Lambeth. As the representative of the rector of Lambeth in my own district parish, according to common law the appointment of that clergyman ought, I believe, to devolve upon me. There is South Lambeth Chapel, a proprietary chapel, in the hands of trustees, which cannot be used for any other but Church of England purposes,—Carlisle Chapel, a proprietary chapel in Kennington Lane,—St. James's proprietary chapel (a dissenting chapel when I came there) in the Newington Road,—Holland Chapel, formerly a dissenting chapel, in the Brixton Road,—there is a school at East Kennington containing a congregation of 500 persons with a clergyman,—and a school at South Lambeth, with a clergyman, containing 150 persons.

1527. You are the only clergyman in your parish who has the cure of souls, are you not?—St. Michael's chapelry is in my parish, but the church is consecrated, having a separate incumbent.

1528. Is it what is called a district chapelry under the 59th of George the Third?—No; it was under one of the acts of Victoria, I believe.

1529. Is not the patronage of it in you?—Yes, it is.

1530. As far as the spiritual cure goes, it is wholly independent of you?—Entirely. It has also a school licensed for public worship, and holding perhaps 600 persons.

1531. And for all the other of the 42,000 you have the cure of souls?—Yes.

1532. You include in that 42,000 the population attached to St. Michael's?—Yes.

1533. How many are there?—The population of St. Michael's in 1841 was 4,600, and adding one third, probably, to it since, you get about 6,000 or 7,000.

1534. You say that there are 6,000; then you have still 36,000 under your pastoral charge?—Yes.

1535. Do you not think it would be a great advantage to have your parish further divided?—Yes. I hope it may be so in the course of another twelvemonth.

1536. Would you wish it to be divided into wholly independent districts?—Entirely so. I want no cure except that which I can manage myself.

1537. What

1537. What schools have you under your own charge?—They are very numerous, and are stated in a paper accompanying my return.

1538. How many districts would it be desirable to divide your parish into?—I should like to divide the hamlet of South Lambeth itself into two districts. I hope in the course of another twelvemonth to form the southern part of South Lambeth into a distinct parish; that will hold probably 7,000 or 8,000. The northern part also of South Lambeth ought to be made a parish. Dr. D'Oyly was very anxious to get South Lambeth Chapel for that purpose. Then, towards Brixton, in the Loughborough Road, there is a population awfully growing, and no place of worship whatever to go to.

1539. How many does your church contain?—About 2,200.

1540. And how many places for the poor are there in your church?—Free seats, for adults, between 600 and 700, and for children about 450.

1541. Have you three services?—Not on Sunday. The church is open the whole day with various services.

1542. Have you any service except on Sunday?—On Thursday evening we have a full service with sermon.

1543. Will you proceed with your statement?—" I would therefore suggest, that all the " incumbents of district parishes into which one large original parish has been divided, " without excepting the incumbent of the original church, should derive some portions of " their income (not perhaps equally) from similar sources, be recognized by somewhat " similar title (as in Mary-le-bone), be precluded from appointing ecclesiastical officers to " their church from any but strictly their own parishioners, such as are rateable to their " own church. Let all the churches be liable to some pew-rent, whatever portion go to the " minister; and where district parishes have each nominally their own separate portion of " tithes (recognized apparently by the Tithe Commissioners as the tithe of that separate district " parish), let such tithes, after cession or voidance of the present rector, be wholly or partly " assigned to the local incumbent. One portion of the tithe might still go (if need be) to " the rector of the original parish, one to the local rector, one to district chapelries of the " district parish, and a fourth to furnish a fund for endowments of future churches. The " prospect of an endowment, however small, would promote in many minds the desire to " build a church or a parsonage. At present, the district clergy who have no endowment, " cannot, I believe, avail themselves of Gilbert's Act. Objection is sometimes entertained " against having districts assigned to chapelries, because of their independence of the rector. " Every parish, it is urged, should be one family; so ought every diocese, so ought the Church " at large; but in parishes approaching in extent to dioceses such domestic unitedness is " unattainable; and attempts to regulate what defies regulation does worse than obviate " success. The rector who holds the patronage will always have a certain precedence, and " consequently, if he be discreet and gentle, a certain influence. The fact of old parishes in " Westminster, as St. Margaret's and St. John's, having been for ecclesiastical purposes " divided, and yet for secular purposes united, forms a precedent which might smooth some " difficulties. It would be every where and every way advantageous for a large parish to " become an union of its district parishes or districts. Each sub-parish having its own officers " and appointments, a local interest would arise, a family of neighbours would cling " around the church, having not only local feelings of neighbourhood, but an interest in " the general movements of the parish at large, and able to exert a voice in the general " management. Instead of one busy party in the mother district, monopolizing power and " overwhelming the rector, the inhabitants in the more distant localities would be repre- " sented; and the poor of each district, varying in their local modes of life,—the mechanics " of one part, the coal men and river men of another, and the gardeners and husbandmen " of a third,—would have their claims and characters watched over by those who know or " can know them. The church rate ceased to be collected in Lambeth altogether, because " of its failure at the mother church; and it failed there, because of the indifference of the " influential inhabitants of the distant parts, who take no interest in Lambeth matters. If " church rates are ever to be satisfactorily enforced, the smallest districts must feel that their " own church is theirs, and that the church rate is levied for their own church; districts " manageable by a clergyman and his helper, where his clerical character and general bear- " ing can leaven the people with a love for their church. We ought in every cure of souls " to have no invidious distinctions among our parishioners; every baptized person should " have no obstacle created by law to his believing himself as much a member of the church, " and as much interested in its welfare, as his richer neighbour. All select vestries for " church purposes should be totally and at once abolished, as opposed to the spirit " and theory of the Church, and, from their powers being undefined, attended with " much inconvenience. I think that the 58th George 3, chapter 4, section 17, should " be acted on: Every sub-parish (without reference to pecuniary arrangements) should be " deemed a rectory, vicarage, &c., according to the nature of the original parish, and a " vault assigned (where there are vaults in churches) to the incumbent's family for the time " being. All mortuary dues hitherto receivable by the incumbent of the original parish " should be at once assigned to the district minister from some future date; existing and " vested interests being redeemable by years purchase. Where there is no glebe or real " property attached to incumbency, might not power be given to raise money (security " being at hand), upon the estimated proceeds of burial ground, from Queen Anne's Bounty,

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" or the Ecclesiastical Commissioners? Every chapel of ease in each district parish should " be declared a chapel of ease to its own district parish church, the officiating minister (at " each vacancy) to be nominated by the district parish incumbent. The bishop, with the " consent of the incumbent, should have power to fix a district pro hâc vice, with power, " under some circumstances, or during a set time, to alter, until a church be built in the " neighbourhood of the chapel, and a regular district be formed. With regard to pew " rental, in addition to what I have stated already respecting the income of the clergy and " its sources, let me say that pew rents may advantageously form a *portion* of a clergy- " man's income. They are to be deemed as much oblations as Easter dues and many other " payments compulsory by law or custom. They should be more equalized, be spread over " a wider surface, and be in many cases lowered so as to meet the means and wishes of " the small tradesman or rising mechanic. Payments, where willingly and anxiously paid, " attach.

" Where from endowment and other sources, an adequate present income is attainable, " might not some plan be devised for vesting a surplus portion of pew rents for the " formation of a fund for the purchase of further endowment, after which the surplus might " still accumulate for the increase of church accommodation, or for the purchase of pro- " prietary chapels with a view to their conversion into churches? Might not money be " borrowed (with added security of parties interested), and charged upon such fund, and a " glebe be purchased at once as a permanent endowment, the glebe being itself a security? " Pews might also be leased to parishioners for a set time, such lease being transferable " only to parishioners. Property might (with the consent of the owners) be charged so " as to form a security to persons lending towards the purchase of endowment, such lien " to be redeemable; churchwardens' power over pews to be declared, so that no pew-renter " should keep his pew vacant in despite of the regulations issued under the sanction of " the bishop. Easter dues might be commuted and transferred annually to the above " fund. Any plan is better than the present mode of collecting them. It is a pity that the " clause empowering trustees appointed by the bishop to receive the surplus pew rents had " not been carried further, and the stipend itself (as well as the surplus after payment of " stipend and necessary expenses), had not been paid over to trustees appointed by the " bishop and the incumbent, *i. e.* to stationary and truly responsible parties.

" I have sometimes thought that a commission might be formed, under the direction of " the bishop, for managing all the surplus pew rental of a rural deanery or large parish. " These funds might be dealt with separately, that is, for each district, or otherwise. The " pew rental of each district parish might (or not) form one fund for promoting endowment " for each church in succession, according to poverty, seniority, or other circumstances. " Thus, churches which, from present wealthier or more popular position, possess larger " funds, might give fraternal aid to those erected in a poorer locality. Churches built by " private funds should be exempt, if patrons desire; and the incumbents and church- " wardens of each subscribing district should have a veto over the appropriation of their " own subscribed amount, if the said veto be exercised within a given time after due " notice in writing shall have been received from the commissioners respecting the " proposed appropriation."

1544. Have you any objection to leave the paper from which you have just read?—This properly speaking, is an answer to question 8, requiring information and suggestions.

1545. As to your own church, you would of course reckon that there should be a district of eight or ten thousand attached to a church of that size?—Yes, I think so; I do not see how it is possible that it should be otherwise.

1546. Then all the rest of the parish you would like to divide into parishes of from three to six thousand?—Certainly. If I could subdivide to that extent I should rejoice at it. If the clergyman is to be paid from pew rental, it should not be merely from the pew rental of his own church; he ought to be paid out of a fund that should be assigned to him. I think it depreciates very much a clergyman's mental character that he should be looking round his church, and lamenting over the poverty of his congregation.

1547. Your income arises mainly from pew rents, does it not?—Yes.

1548. You had a certain sum, either 500*l.* or 550*l.* a year, out of the pew rents assigned to you?—Mr. Otter began with 600*l.*, and the Church Commissioners diminished his receipts to 550*l.*, with a view to increase the surplus fund for a parsonage house.

1549. What is the whole amount of the pew rents?—The whole amount of pew rents is somewhat under 900*l.*

1550. Then the surplus was laid aside, was it not for the building or the purchase of a parsonage house?—Yes.

1551. And which parsonage house has now been built or acquired?—It has been acquired.

1552. Now, I suppose, there is still a surplus going on?—A very large surplus.

1553. What is done with that surplus?—It is left, sub silentio, in the hands of the church- wardens; and they, with the select vestry, do very much what they like with it. They invested about 600*l.*, and at one time they had 400*l.* in hand. Under these circumstances, consider- ing that I gave up my accumulated surplus when the church rates were refused during the formidable year of 1832, it was thought that a portion of this should be assigned to me.

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The select vestry proposed to relieve me by paying my curate for me, but I objected to my curate being independent of me. After some inquiries, it was found needful to apply to the bishop, who assigned to me an additional sum of 72*l.* 11*s.*, 22*l.* 11*s.* of which was intended to cover quit rent and other charges upon the parsonage house. This not being a freehold property, but held as leasehold property belonging to the duchy of Cornwall, it was necessary that some charges should be annually paid, and it was in fact in that manner redeemed to the clergyman.

1554. Is no surplus invested from the pew-rents?—No; it all goes, in fact, to the select vestry, who legally have no right to it.

1555. You have no church rates, have you?—No.

1556. This surplus supplies the place of church rates, does not it?—That and their mortuary dues.

1557. The mortuary dues they have also?—Half of them.

1558. Your church is not only self supporting, but it is something more?—Yes.

1559. If new districts were formed, and new churches built, do you suppose there would be considerable pew-rents in each of those divisions?—So much depends upon the locality in the first place, and upon the clergyman in the next.

1560. In some the pew-rents would be ample?—No doubt they would.

1561. And in others, I suppose, there would be some pew-rents?—Yes.

1562. There is no part of your parish so poor but that some pew-rents would be paid on a church being built in it?—There is no part of the parish so poor but what some pew-rents might be paid,—small rents; and I think it would be extremely desirable that small pew-rents should be paid.

1563. You would vest the pew-rents generally in one body of commissioners to supply the weaker places out of the stronger?—Exactly.

1564. How does that church in the New Cut fare now, which is among a very poor and dissolute population?—It is astonishing how it has succeeded, through the piety and excellence of Mr. Peat.

1565. That is in St. John's Waterloo parish, is it not?—Yes. My own experience as a clergyman of Lambeth, both with reference to the first church which I had opposite the workhouse, and with reference to Mr. Peat's church, built under somewhat similar circumstances, is, that vice and profligacy flee away before, or rather, that those who had been vicious and profligate are conciliated into the church, by patience, discretion, and determination, the fear of God, and fearlessness of man. Many who have once come around the church in course of erection, and curse the stones which they saw being put one upon another towards the formation of it, afterwards became in many cases regular attendants at its services. With regard to the people in the New Cut and in Lambeth Walk, but especially in the former place, there have been remarkable instances of persons breaking the Sabbath who are now giving their guinea freely towards the support of some charity connected with the church. But each clergyman should have a small endowment, enough to pay house rent, if it was nothing more than that, giving him a certain *locus standi* in his profession. It is not so much the amount of payment as the professional standing and influence of a clergyman in society which we should aim at.

Adjourned.

Tuesday, 3d July 1849.

The ARCHBISHOP OF YORK in the Chair.

Rev. F. Kitchin.
3d July 1849.

The Reverend F. KITCHIN examined.

1566. OF what parish are you incumbent?—Christchurch, in the parish of Stone.

1567. Is that a district church?—Yes.

1568. How many churches are there in the parish of Stone?—There are now four; namely, the parish church, my church (Christchurch), Hilderstone church, and Aston.

1569. Has each of the new churches a district assigned to it?—Yes.

1570. By the Church Commissioners?—No; I think by the Church Patronage Act,—by the Bishop.

1571. Which of those churches was built under the Patronage Act?—All three of them.

1572. They are all, therefore, distinct incumbencies?—Yes.

1573. What are the particular inconveniencies of the present state of things with reference to division?—We find that distinct incumbencies are more a theory than a reality. We have a district assigned to us, but our people can have their children baptized, and women

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churched, funerals and marriages performed, and all without our permission, out of our district, and without our knowledge even, and we find that our hands are tied behind our backs, and that is our great complaint. In my district, with regard to churchings, in the year 1848, though I have 4,000 souls under my charge, I had but seven churchings.

1574. But are you not aware that that is contrary to the existing law?—I was not aware of that. They go to the parish church to have these offices performed.

1575. How would that be remedied by further division?—By making our charges more distinct we think it would be remedied.

1576. You are aware that those districts are completely distinct for all spiritual purposes, are you not?—We have always understood that they have permission to go to the parish church if they choose, and they slip away from us in that way, in order to avoid double fees, and from a desire not to be recognised with us, to avoid sharing in our other heavy burdens.

1577. There is a general understanding?—Yes; a general understanding that all the offices can be performed at the mother church. My church is at one end of the town of Stone, and the parish church is at the other, and they most of them slip away from me.

1578. Would they not do so under any other system of division?—We presume that if there were distinct parishes, like those constituted under Sir Robert Peel's Act, they would not. What we want is, to have all district churches whatever, and all ancient chapels, as free and independent as those under this most admirable Act.

1579. Are you not aware that they are as distinct as if they were distinct parishes for ecclesiastical purposes?—But still the people go from us, and have all the offices of the Church performed elsewhere, and we cannot prevent them, at least we have hitherto been under the idea that there was no remedy. What I have just heard is altogether new to me; they have been permitted to go, and we have been under the impression that there was no remedy.

1580. How are those district churches repaired?—We repair them as we can. They are very much out of repair, and are going fast to decay, but we have no funds.

1581. How is the parish church repaired?—By a rate, although under very peculiar circumstances. I was first of all curate of the parish of Stone in 1831, and I first entered on the *sole* charge of that parish in 1833. There was only that church and an ancient chapel in a small hamlet, five miles from Stone, at that time; no other church at all: and there were three services in all, two at the parish church and one in this chapel. The parish extends over 22,000 acres of ground, the population at that time being 8,000, and the parishioners are in some cases nearly eleven miles asunder; about one half of them live in the twelve hamlets, extending from *one* to *six* miles from the parish church. The church is private property, and was built under a special Act of Parliament. All the seats are private property, belonging to very few individuals; and there is of course great grumbling throughout the parish at large, that people living in the hamlets five or six miles from it, should be called upon to repair a church which is private property, and in former times been the subject of shameful traffic. The pews give votes for members of Parliament for the county.

1582. Do the inhabitants of these districts pay church rates?—Yes; and they complain very grievously of that. I mean the churchmen living in other districts. There would be no opposition from the dissenters; the opposition would come from the outlaying hamlets, who are generally members of the Church.

1583. But they do not do anything for the repairs of their own churches?—No; not in either the new churches or the licensed schoolrooms. That is all to be collected by begging.

1584. Have you any reason to suppose that if they were exempted from the payment of church rates to the mother church they would be willing to pay church rates for their own churches?—I have been in the parish for eighteen years; I sustained, under God, an important position in all these remarkable movements, and I have no hesitation in saying that every one of them would, and be very glad to be released altogether from the mother church. We think that in no case should a rate be laid and funds collected over any district, and yet that district have no share in the rate.

1585. They would be glad to be released, but would they take upon themselves at the same time the liability of repairing their own church? I have no doubt they would. But they consider it a great hardship that they should be called upon to repair a church and carry on the service for the benefit and advantage of a few private individuals.

1586. In fact, to be made subject to a rate for the repair of the church?—Yes; I have no doubt of it.

1587. You perform all the offices at your church except marriages?—Yes; and I perform marriages when I can get them.

1588. The fees, as your district was formed under the Church Patronage Act, go to the incumbent of the parish church?—Yes. I perform them for nothing to the poor, and for a trifle to those who are able to pay, and I am very glad to do it, in consequence of the very serious inconvenience and distress arising from the marriages celebrated at Fulford and Stoke-upon-Trent. I have a statement here from Fulford. The small chapelry at

Fulford

Fulford is in one of these twelve hamlets, where there are little more than 300 people, five miles from the parish church; and under the idea that they can marry over the whole parish, in that retired place within a very trifle there are as many marriages as at the parish church; the parish church is in Stone. The statement I have here is taken for three years. In 1846, there were at the mother church thirty-six marriages, and at Fulford thirty-four; in 1847, there were at the mother church thirty-two marriages, and at Fulford twenty-four. In the last year there were thirty-five marriages at the mother church, and thirty at Fulford. And this is not the worst. Stoke-upon-Trent is the place where the most distressing and improper marriages take place; they are performed there from all the neighbouring parishes. And I am sorry to say, that I have frequently found in my own district that parties whom I supposed to have been married at Stoke have deceived their friends, and been living in a state of concubinage, till affliction or something has come upon them, and it has then been discovered that they have not been married. The mother church would not lose anything if she married no more than her own. If the mother church at Stone was permitted to marry none but her own people, she ought to have more marriages than she has now.

1589. The marriages are in a parish with which you have no connexion whatever—Stoke?—I am joining to Stoke, and if I had the sole power of marrying my own parishioners I could prevent my people going there, because I should know them, and should have an additional motive to use due care in this particular. I am authorized to say, by Mr. Oliver, the incumbent of Fulford, that he would be very glad to have a defined district and be released from the wholesale marrying that takes place in his little hamlet. When I went first to Stone there were three services on the Lord's day, and now there are sixteen altogether for the parishoners of Stone. There were two churches, and a licensed schoolroom in one of the hamlets, where now is a church. Now there are ten, and nine in which the Lord's Supper is administered,

1590. The fees for marriages go by law, do they not, to the incumbent of Stone?—Yes.

1591. After the present incumbent, the other fees except the marriage fees would go to you?—Yes.

1592. Is not that the real practical difficulty, the payment of either double fees or the loss of fees to one of the churches?—We say that there would be no loss. As to marriage fees, *vested rights* would not be interfered with at all, for if the parties were still confined in marrying to their own district, the mother church would never have less than she now has. With regard to funerals, we think that a body should not be removed from any clergyman's district or parish without a certificate from the incumbent to that effect; this would recognise the clergyman's position in his charge, and respect the feelings of surviving relatives. And as to churchings, the service is fallen into disuse, and the fee lost, or nearly so, with us.

1593. How would there be fewer marriages in Fulford because there were no longer double fees at your church?—The Fulford people ought to be confined to their own hamlet of Fulford; and if there was no double fee, as far as my district is concerned, I would take care that they did. But the double fee meets us at every turn, and defeats our best laid schemes for the improvement of our people, and the carrying out the parochial system.

1594. So they are by law?—They are under the impression that they can marry over the whole parish, and I am very glad of this valuable information.

1595. How is the parish church of Fulford repaired?—By assistance from the rate; it is an ancient chapelry.

1596. You have no assistance from the mother church?—No.

1597. Nor at Aston?—No. When our church is out of repair, the archdeacon and the rural dean come round, and they inspect and leave instructions for such and such things to be done, all very necessary and proper which we never dream of attempting to perform. This is very painful to our feelings, that we are obliged to disregard the instructions of those in authority.

1598. You have a repair fund, have you not?—Yes, but it is so trifling it goes no distance. The greatest hardship, I should say, is, that there is a tax of 180*l.* per annum upon my district before I am upon an equality with the mother church, as to funds for carrying on the schools and other religious institutions. The people have to pay, first, pew-rents; secondly, they have to pay for different repairs; and thirdly, to raise the sum necessary for the sustentation of divine service; and then double fees; and if we cannot raise this sum, it must come out of the minister's pittance; consequently, our schools are thoroughly crippled, the charitable resources of the locality having been exausted in supporting the heavy expenses of the church.

1599. How would you be benefited by a further subdivision in that respect?—We would have our own rate, and no doubt that would relieve us considerably.

1600. Have you any reason to suppose that those who live in the district belonging to the old church would object very much to your being exempted from the liability to support the mother church?—I have no reason to think so. There is a very good feeling in the parish; and the only complaint in the other districts is, that if it had not been for the clergy of those districts, the rate would have gone long ago. We fight for the rate for the old church, though we do not share it.

 1601. Your

Rev. F. Kitchen.

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1601. Your district contributes to the repair of the old church ?—Largely ; my district contains, I should say, 12,000 acres of land out of the 22,000.

1602. Does the old chapelry of Fulford also contribute ?—Yes, it contributes its quota.

1603. Are the pews in the parish church free ?—There is not a free pew in the parish church except the clergyman's. The seats are all private property ; the church was built under a special Act of Parliament, and the seats sold to the highest bidder. There are about 162 sittings in the aisles for children on benches and 152 for adults, also in the aisles at much inconvenience. Those are all the free sittings. With regard to my church, one third is free. I have a statement here, showing that there are 283 free sittings in my church, and I have 385 children and teachers to occupy them, and there is not a free sitting for an adult left ; when they are all at church, 100 of my children and teachers would have to sit in the pews.

1604. Is the amount of the rental such as meets the character of the population ?—We are sadly over-pewed. There may be about one third of the people who would be really and truly capable of renting pews. Two thirds are far too great a proportion of letable pews for my district, or for any other that I happen to know in my neighbourhood, and one third is far too little free sittings. Where there is an efficient ministry we find that the children and teachers will occupy more than "*the one third* free." With respect to the present state of my schools, I have one in six and two thirds of the population in them ; there are in the schools under me 600 children, and taking my three schools around my church, 411 children. All I can raise from sermons and contributions under whatever name is 1*s.* 3¾*d.* per head per annum ; whilst the average cost of 519 schools in England is 20*s.* 7½*d** .in Wales 12*s.* 1*d.*, and in Scotland 12*s.* 9*d.*

1605. Have you a large portion of the poor in your district ?—Yes.

1606. Is there anything further that you would wish to state to the Commissioners ?—We consider that the poor are excluded from the church, and we do not know how to move in the matter. We have plenty of pew room in the church ; and according to our calculation, in the town of Stone we can seat one in two and a half, but that is a calculation which cannot be carried out in reality, in consequence of this private-property system. People are as tenacious of their pews as they are of their drawing rooms, and have locks on the doors in the same manner. One person will have a pew that will hold fourteen and sit in it himself alone, only now and then, perhaps twelve times in the year. When I first began to move in church extension in the parish of Stone, then having sole charge, as stipendiary curate, the incumbent being non-resident, I took thirteen of the largest pews in the church, and I watched, and took the average attendance every Sunday for three months in those thirteen pews, which contained 121 sittings. On Sunday there were, at that time, three services. The occupiers of these pews had 362 opportunities of attending ; but the average attendance per Sunday was only thirty-one ; that is, the pews contained 121 sittings, and three services multiplied by 121 give 363 ; and all we could get for three months per Sunday, on an average, were thirty-one, and consequently there were 332 opportunities wasted every Sunday.

1607. Do you think that a pew-rental system would be better ?—We want a free church to sit in, to counteract the effect of this unfortunate special Act. In fact, we want the parochial system, *the right* of each parishioner to be seated *free* in his parish church, and his only contribution to be his lawful church rate, which, under those circumstances, would easily be had.

1608. What effect would a free church have ?—If my church were free it would have the effect of vacating a great number of pews in the old church, for it happens that the greater part of the pews belong to people in my district, in consequence of the peculiar circumstances as to the proprietorship of land at the time that the church was built, which is now just 100 years ago. Lord St. Vincent, Swynfen Jervis, Esquire, hold many of the pews which are placed to the different farms ; and I have no doubt, if my church were free and the pews appropriated to the church-going families in my district, that they would, under a proper measure sanctioned by the legislature, renounce the pews in the old church. Besides, this would do away with a very degrading and painful circumstance in the district incumbency. When we invite, exhort, or rebuke our parishioners for not coming to church we are frequently met with the observation, "We hope in a short time to be able to take "a pew, and then we will come regularly." In other words, we feel that in inviting them to church we are inviting them to take our pews and increase our income.

1609. In that case you would have them all free and no rental whatever ?—None whatever. Perhaps I had better not mention names ; but a great number of my people have told me, that if they had appropriated pews in my church, that is, f they were seated in church on the good old parochial system, that they would care nothing at all about their pews in the old church ; and by that means a great many pews might be appropriated to the poor at the old church, and in part do away with the unfortunate circumstances of the church.

1610. Might there not be exchanges between the two churches, by which pews would be given up in the old church ?—Unless there was some certainty afforded by Act of Parliament

* See Committee of Council, vol. i., 1847-48.

ment, or by proper church authority, some certain grounds to go upon, under present circumstances I am sure it would not be done.

1611. Have you anything to state with respect to charitable bequests in the parish?—Yes. With respect to the charities, the principal part of them is in my district, and my poor people complain very much that there are none given away at my church, or through my hands, and that they are given away at the parish church in such a way as to require attendance at church there, a necessary condition in order to become a qualified recipient; and I am afraid that many of the charities in my district (of course I do not know, I charge nobody with partiality, but no one could give satisfaction upon such terms as those,) go clear away from my poor people; at least they complain very much of it, that the people in the other district get more than they do.

1612. You would have the distribution of the charities made in the different districts?—Yes; according to the population of the district.

1613. Are they ordered to be given away in the parish church?—No, not particularly.

1614. Have you anything to state to the Commissioners, with regard to churchwardens?—I am in fact my own churchwarden; we have no use for them, there is nothing for them to do.

1615. Not to arrange the seats?—No.

1616. You have churchwardens, have you not?—Yes; but they are of no use, but a very great expense to me, as everything is to be paid by myself. I can order whatever is necessary to be done, and see it done, without any one to assist me.

1617. How are the visitation expenses paid?—They are paid by myself; and we think that very hard; not by the church at all. The expense of conveyance of the clergy and churchwarden, and cost there, together with the fees, amount to from 3*l.* to 5*l.* per annum.

1618. You would wish in your particular case to have your church as free as possible?—I would indeed; to have the church as free as possible for both rich and poor. We are over-pewed.

1619. Would not the poor prefer contributing something?—No, they cannot afford it. They are alienated from the church entirely from this peculiar exclusion for so many years, and they must be got back very carefully if they can be got back at all, but it is very difficult to get them back. In one of my statements which I sent out at the time I was building Christ Church, I find I have this printed: "Within a circle of two miles from "the present church (*omitting* the hundreds beyond that line and yet under its care) "there are 466 families, containing 2,092 souls, *members of the Church of England*, who "have not a single sitting in the church." This statement I took myself from house to house, passing dissenters of every name.

1620. Do the Methodists gain the poor in your parish?—There are very few dissenters now left. I am afraid the poor will come to nothing if we continue to exclude them from the church. We fear infidelity more than dissent. The dissenters are very much reduced indeed, and have always behaved very well; indeed this parish is under very great obligations to them, for I do not know what would have been our present state, if they had not kept something like a feeling of religion alive in the place.

1621. You have lost the poor, but they have not gained them?—I have gained a great many; half of my congregation were once dissenters. We never had them to lose since I knew the place. I speak of course of the great body of the poor. We have always had a very nice sprinkling of them at church. We want church room; or rather we have plenty of church room, but it is tied up in a way that is not serviceable to the people at all.

1622. How would the expense of these churches be provided for, were you to do away with pew-rents?—The calculation is this, that a less sum than you want now in forming one of Sir Robert Peel's districts would open the church at Stone; 100*l.* a year would set us all free. There is the machinery. We have services in sixteen places every Lord's day. Instead of one stipendiary curate as formerly we have now at work *five incumbents and three curates.* The Lord's Supper constantly administered in nine places. When I came here we had only one day-school, and that in a hamlet four miles from church; we have now *fourteen* day-schools; and in *one* of the nine places just named, where we have the Lord's Supper, I had more last month *by one-third* than I used to have at the parish church when I had the charge of the whole parish, even at the Easter festival. We want this machinery at work. In the hamlets, where I have licensed schoolrooms, I have all there, rich and poor. There are no dissenters there.

1623. What is the amount of the pew-rents?—About 100*l.* a year.

1624. Are all your pews let?—No. I do not care to let more than I do. I get as many of the poor people into them as I can.

Tuesday, 10th July 1849.

The EARL OF HARROWBY in the Chair.

Archdeacon Rushton.

10th July 1849.

The Venerable ARCHDEACON RUSHTON examined.

1625. You are the Archdeacon of Manchester?—I am.

1626. How long have you held that appointment?—Since 1843.

1627. You have been a clergyman in that part of the country much longer, have you not?—Yes, 25 years.

1628. What is the name of your benefice?—Prestwich-cum-Oldham.

1629. Have you considered the question which relates to the necessity of subdividing large parishes?—I have; it has occupied my attention for the last twelve years.

1630. Have you had great practical experience of the evils which result from the want of such subdivision?—Yes, being conversant with almost every parish in the county.

1631. Would you take Manchester itself as a specimen of those evils?—Manchester exhibits an amount of evil greater than any other from its having a larger amount of population concentrated in it. There are other parishes fully as destitute of church accommodation as the parish of Manchester.

1632. To what extent has the principle of subdivision been carried out in the town of Manchester?—The whole of the town and parish of Manchester have been divided into ecclesiastical districts of one kind or other in number about fifty, comprehending a population of 400,000 by this time.

1633. Can you form any notion as to the average number of inhabitants in those districts?—I cannot speak to the *average* number; some districts have above 20,000, and others have not 2,000 inhabitants in them.

1634. The district remaining with the parish church, I suppose, is much the largest?—It is, containing the thickest population.

1635. What do you suppose to be the amount of population in the district of the parish church?—As the district attached to the parish church is not bounded by any township limits, we have either to guess at it, or to send out persons to ascertain. Sometimes we employ the rural police, and at other times private individuals; the population I should say is from 20,000 to 30,000.

1636. Are any or all of the districts quite independent of the parish church in ecclesiastical matters?—So far as the cure of souls is concerned I should say that they are all independent of the mother church, with the exception of three; viz., St. Luke's Chorlton-on-Medlock, a church licensed merely and having only a conventional district, the other St. Clement's in the town of a similar character, two private chapels you might style them, and the third is the chapel for the blind open in part to the public.

1637. Have all or any of those district churches the right to administer baptism?—I should say all, with the exception of the two I have mentioned.

1638. And of marriage?—Not all of marriage; some are parochial chapelries, which have long enjoyed the rites of marriage, baptism, and sepulture; they are quasi parishes—*i. e.* parishes in all but the name, and have been from time immemorial. Twenty-six or twenty-seven of them have the right of sepulture and baptism given them by the Church Building Acts; others again have churches and districts assigned to them without burial grounds.

1639. Is the amount of church accommodation and spiritual instruction in each district at all adequate to the wants of the district?—I should say not, scarcely in any of the subdivisions.

1640. Is it possible for the clergy of such districts to visit the sick, and to attend to the spiritual wants of the people?—Not in the towns and large villages of the parish.

1641. Are double fees paid at any of those churches, part of which go to the mother church?—In the greater proportion they are. A few of the old chapels to which I alluded and the parochial chapels are exempt.

1642. There is St. Anne's?—St. Anne's probably pays; I am not quite sure whether it does or not.

1643. Is not one consequence of that, that the people from these districts go in greater numbers to the mother church for baptisms and marriages?—They do.

1644. So that the baptisms and marriages solemnised in the mother church are not confined to the persons residing in the district of the mother church?—They marry and baptize over the whole parish as if it had not been divided.

1645. Is

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1645. Is not the greater number of such baptisms and marriages a source of great indecorum and impropriety in the administration of the rites of the Church?—In marriages I have not witnessed anything of the kind. In baptisms there is what might be termed irregularity, and how it is to be met I can scarcely tell where there are such numbers. I have seen 120 children, male and female brought to be baptised at one time.

1646. Would not that evil be partly cured if the persons were restricted to their own church for those rites of the Church?—The irregularity in that church of course would be removed.

1647. Do you happen to know whether any inquiry is made at the parish church as to whether the people coming there for baptism and marriage belong to other parishes?—Probably in baptisms no inquiry is made. Not being one of the parochial clergy of Manchester I do not know; in marriages they do make inquiry, but it is almost impossible to ascertain whether they are or not their own parishioners. The parishioners of the whole parish, which contains twenty-eight townships, claim the right to marry at the mother church.

1648. Therefore there is no inquiry?—There is more or less of inquiry as to the residence of the parties, but it is almost impossible for the clergy or the clerks to know whether they are their own parishioners.

1649. How are the clergy of the district churches appointed?—Five by the Crown and bishop alternately, four by the bishop, twenty-one by the dean and canons, sixteen by trustees, five by private individuals, and three have no districts.

1650. And how are the clergy paid?—Some of the old chapels have endowments in lands, others have but an endowment according to the Act 1 & 2 Will. 4., £1,000, and its proceeds, in addition to the pew-rents. Others again have simply but the pew-rents and the dues.

1651. The churches having been consecrated without any endowment?—Yes, those dependent on pew rents and dues. I had occasion to visit one of our best situated churches built and endowed under the 1 & 2 Will. 4., having one third of the sittings free, and the other two thirds rentable, in a rich neighbourhood, and with a very acceptable minister; he assured me last week that the whole of his income did not exceed 250*l.*

1652. After paying all the church expenses?—No, the gross amount of the pew-rents and endowment.

1653. Out of which he had to pay all the church expenses?—No; he has 250*l.* as the whole of his receipts from the pew-rents, endowment, and fees; the outgoings are small, inasmuch as the congregation pay a rate voluntarily imposed upon the sittings, and out of the fund so raised they pay for the repairs and current expenses attending divine worship.

1654. Do you know what they come to?—6*s.* per sitting per annum.

1655. Equally upon every part of the church wherever they are placed;—Upon every paying sitting; one third of the church is free.

1656. Is the whole of the church which is letable let?—Not all; the church seats 1,500 people, and 500, speaking in round numbers, are free; the other 1,000 ought to go to the minister, but there was a very large deficiency in the building fund when the church was consecrated. The site of the church and yard is vested in trustees, and by virtue of that vesting the trustees claim the proceeds of the vaults and burial places in liquidation of the debt. They claim also the freehold of the sittings to a certain extent, so that if A.B. apply to the churchwardens for this year for a pew in the church in question he is told that the pew holds (say) six persons, and is worth six guineas per annum. Two thirds of that at twenty years purchase the trustees take, the other third goes to the minister.

1657. Do you mean that they would make him pay eighty guineas?—Yes. A.B. pays eighty guineas, and the other two guineas per annum remain as what is termed a chief rent, the only portion payable to the minister.

1658. Do the people take seats giving eighty guineas for their six seats and two guineas a year besides?—Yes, and subject to the rate also that I mentioned. The Commissioners will remember that this is one of the most favourably situated churches, and yet the clergyman does not receive more than 250*l.* a year.

1659. What proportion of the seats are let at this rate?—Fully two thirds. I mean two thirds or three fourths of the two thirds which are letable. It is a system of which the clergy I think have great reason to complain, and I am very glad the question was put to me to enable me to give this explanation upon one of the most crying grievances, I think, that we have. Meanwhile if the pew of six sittings be not sold, and is simply rented from quarter-day to quarter-day, such casual tenant may take it at the whole six guineas a year, and during that casual tenancy the whole amount is paid to the minister, so that his income is fluctuating.

1660. If the trustees cannot sell the sittings, vaults, and burial places, they lose their advantage altogether?—Yes.

1661. This church is in a respectable situation?—In one of the richest districts in Manchester.

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1662. What number of new churches should you consider are wanting in Manchester to put the place in a satisfactory condition?—I cannot say that I have enumerated them; so much depends upon the locality, and whether we have a great number of Roman Catholics or not; we cannot calculate upon their attending our places of worship if they were built. I will give the number in my opinion required in an appendix to my evidence.

1663. Manchester is both a rich place and a place in which there is still a considerable amount of church feeling?—Very great indeed, and there could not be stronger evidence in favour of the church feeling in the town of Manchester than this: some time ago when it was discovered that a place of worship originally intended to be consecrated as a church was not permanently secured to the establishment, the parties who had taken sittings to a considerable amount per annum, without exception gave them up. The building has since been let to different denominations, but is now entirely disused as a place of worship in the midst of a population of 30,000 with only four churches.

1664. You have church districts under one name or other in Manchester with a population ranging from 2,000 to 20,000?—Yes.

1665. Have you at all observed the different results of having a larger or a smaller population attached to one church, or under the direction of one superior clergyman?—I am throughout an advocate for separate and distinct districts as the result of my experience. My first parish contained 900 people; I then had a parish of 3,000 people; the one I have now contains 70,000 people.

1666. What are the advantages of this subdivision which your experience suggests?—A more satisfactory superintendence of a district, the visiting from house to house, decidedly visible improvement in the morals and education of the people, and the satisfaction of all the officials in knowing that there is no family that cannot be visited.

1667. You do not believe that the authority which is delegated from the chief clergyman in a large district to the curates under him has the same effect or influence on the population, as when the clergyman himself, who has a superior authority, is brought into immediate contact with them?—Certainly not.

1668.—Do you see that with respect to the number of children brought under education in the respective cases?—That depends upon the tact or activity of the individual clergyman and his teachers more than upon the division or non-division of a parish. Our schools in large places are kept up in numbers and efficiency as much by visiting the parents, looking after the children, and beating up for them as we familiarly term it, as by anything.

1669. In such cases as that, as the clergyman is brought in small districts more immediately in contact with the people, he must be more efficient also for maintaining the schools?—Yes; the people feel better satisfied when they can point out their "ownparson," one who is resident amongst them, whose conversation and example and influence they are daily conscious of.

1670. Clergymen will remain longer in connexion with a poor district, even upon poor resources where they are independent, than where they simply exercise a delegated authority as curate?—Yes, especially if there be a place of residence.

1671. And where they have a freedom and independence of action?—Yes, they feel more interested in the people, and the people in them; curates are apt to consider themselves as mere temporary aids or occupants, and the inhabitants consider them so too. On these grounds it is that I have in my correspondence with the two societies—the Pastoral Aid Society and the Additional Curates Society—urged upon their committees for years back to make their grants in behalf of curates who shall settle down in given districts and subdivisions of a parish. Those appointments have led in a great number of cases to additional churches and schools, and the whole apparatus of church machinery.

1672. You would very often plant a clergyman before building a church, and create a desire for the church by his ministrations?—I would, but with this understanding that it should be positively with a view to the erection of a church and schools the first opportunity he has. We locate additional clergymen sometimes, or send out our curates to distant hamlets or villages in large parishes. We procure a room for school and divine service: it may be a loft over a stable or a blacksmith's shop, the club room of a public house, or woolroom, or a hat shop, and we create a disposition for religious ordinances. We soon find children bronght to baptism, mothers to be churched, candidates for admission to confirmation and the Lord's Supper increase, the previously indifferent brought to religious worship, regard for the Sabbath extended, and public morals being improved. But if after an experience of two or three years from the falling off of the funds of one of those societies which supplies the salary, and the incumbent is unable from private and local resources to continue the services of the curate of that district, then the evil we attempted to remedy is increased. We have given the people a relish for religious services, and then disappoint them. They either fall off from religious profession, or run to the first place of worship that they can find, or set up some system of their own, however extravagant.

1673. It ought to lead to effects which do not follow, and this spiritual distinction is very apparent and grievous?—I mean to say that they do not, on being so forsaken by the curate, put themselves to the trouble of going in any great numbers to the mother church or district chapel, a distance of a mile or more.

1674. You

1674. You would have had the earliest possible steps taken to follow up the establishment of a curate and a district with the full superintendence of the school and church, with residence?—Yes; it is in that particular that I think the Act called "Sir Robert Peel's Act" is so valuable to us. We can plant an additional clergyman in a given district though a church is not built for five or six years. He is there working, and cannot be taken away. He is responsible for the duties of the place, and he feels that responsibility. But a mere curate who goes there as a matter of expediency for the time does not feel that responsibility, or look forward to permanent effects.

1675. Lancashire has derived considerable benefit from that Act?—Yes, very great indeed; thirty-nine new districts or parishes have been created; two others in progress.

1676. Have many churches followed upon that?—Thirty-one already built; six more or less in progress.

1677. Are there still many deficient?—There are but three which seem likely to be long delayed.

1678. How many Peelite districts are there in Manchester?—One with its church, one without a church, and one with its church is now being formed in the town.

1679. Altogether in the parish?—Six already created, one about to be formed. We have very few formed in the parish of Manchester considering its population; only one Peelite district in Manchester town and one in the country wanting their churches.

1680. Do you apprehend any evil would arise from cutting off districts from parishes which in many cases must consist entirely, or nearly so, of the poorer classes; and do you conceive that that evil would outweigh the advantages of subdivision?—There are districts where to appearance more or less of evil would result from that. I mean to say in increasing the number of poor livings in poor localities. I think, however, there is a general feeling in behalf of the poor districts spread over the rich districts of the neighbourhood; for the poor districts are generally in juxtaposition with the richer, and hitherto we have found but few instances where there is any difficulty in maintaining their position in comparison with older established and more populous parishes.

1681. You believe that the charity of their rich neighbours might be by proper management and zeal called forth in aid of the poorer parishes?—I think so.

1682. You would also calculate, would you not, that help would be given from without, if an endowment were to be found, and which would be given at once and freely to a poor district though not to a rich one?—We have instances of new churches built in districts formed under Sir Robert Peel's Act, where, from the poverty of the residents, the local subscriptions did not amount to 300*l*., and therefore built by funds obtained from without.

1683. Are you able to quote any remarkable instances in Lancashire where you think subdivision would be desirable?—Taking parishes in their present entirety, the most necessitous is the town and parish of Rochdale. If you come to individual towns and townships of large population, the most deficient in church accommodation are Castleton (Rochdale), Todmorden with its adjuncts, Hulme near Manchester, and Spotland, where the proportion is from 1 in 18 to 1 in 9 of the population. Six other places have sittings for 1 in 8, fourteen for 1 in 7; twelve have room for 1 in 6; twenty such places can seat a fifth, and twenty-four can accommodate a fourth of their population in their respective churches.

1684. Is the deficiency made up by places of worship of dissenting denominations?—By no means supplied by dissenting meeting houses. They can no more exist in poor districts than churches. Religious ordinances and regard to religious duties can only be maintained in such districts permanently by permanent endowments and a resident ministry.

1685. Will you state what you would do for such parishes if you had the power. In that case would you say that two churches should be built, and new parishes cut out, and the mother church left with its fair proportion of the population?—Yes.

1686. What is about the largest population that you would assign to one church?—In a town, from three to five thousand, if I find them all Protestants; if there are amongst them Roman Catholics I know it is of no use providing for them.

1687. Where you have a church to hold 2,000 you would not assign that to 4,000 inhabitants?—That would depend upon the locality. If it was a town district I should do so.

1688. The fine old churches of four centuries standing that hold 2,000 generally have a population around them, have they not?—Not always, but they are generally well filled, so strong is the attachment to all mother churches. Take the case of a parish moderate in its income at one time, but from the adventitious circumstance of its glebes being situated near the mother church, and now forming a part of the town, much increased in value by the leasing off of this property for building purposes. I do not see why in cases of benefices above a certain value a portion of that annual increase arising from property originally given for the spiritual instruction of the whole parish should not go where required to the endowment of new districts. In many cases tithe-rent charge, or portions of glebe, or chief rents, might be alienated from the rich mother church for the endowment and permanent establishment of a daughter with her fair family around her. The church through the medium

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of the Ecclesiastical Commissioners might devise some mode of encouraging such appropriations or alienations. Were there funds for such purposes, proposals for meeting such benefactions might be made to lay impropriators who were willing to create new benefices, and endow them with the tithes or glebes which they now hold for their own benefit. In all cases I would abolish the practice of letting pews in churches, and the sub-letting of appropriated sittings to private advantage.

1689. You look upon the pewing of chancels as evidence of such an increase of population as should require a new church and minister?—Yes, and I should take the proceeds of those pews in the chancel towards the endowment of a new district, where the living would bear it.

1690. What is your experience as to the advantage or otherwise of free seats in the churches in the Lancashire districts?—I would not have them absolutely free; I know that the committee of the Incorporate Society are very fond of insisting upon it, but I would rather charge a rent, however small, if I gave the people the money back again. I can refer to cases in which churches have been enlarged from grants from the Incorporate Society and local subscriptions, and the north and south aisles made free. I have my eye on one case where the north aisle is close up to a lot of buildings, dark, damp, and uninviting; the south is open to the sun, comfortable seats, dry and inviting as can be; both were declared to be free; the minister asked the bishop for leave to charge a small rent for the sittings, but his lordship could not consent. Subsequently the minister and wardens consented to leave those on the south and more inviting side free to all. On the north and uninviting side they made a charge of 1*s.* a year per sitting, and to this day those on the north are filled, and those on the south side, which are still free, are comparatively unoccupied. Our manufacturing people have a spirit of independence amongst them, and look for their quid pro quo, and like to pay for what they have. They do not like the idea of intruding or thrusting some neighbour out of his seat. Give the poor labouring man a sitting, charge him a small sum per year for it, and he feels he has a stake there, and will own and defend it.

1691. If, instead of being altogether free and unappropriated, you had them free but appropriated, would you prefer that?—I would prefer a mere nominal rent to their being absolutely free.

1692. The poor people in Lancashire you think mostly are able to pay a small remuneration for their seat, and prefer it?—Generally they would rather pay for it.

1693. You think that the rule which has been uniformly pursued under all circumstances of leaving a certain portion of the sittings in a church free is very unadvisable?—Very unadvisable, and I quite admire that clause in the Act of Parliament where a discretion is vested in the bishop to charge small rents.

1694. In the Peel districts the seats are free, are they not?—No.

1695. Is there power to rent seats in the Peel districts?—I cannot say. The question has been put to the Ecclesiastical Commissioners, and their answer has been this: "We "have no authority to declare it one way or the other, but we must leave it to you and "the bishop." Some of our Peelite parishes are free, and in others one third of the pew rents goes to the minister, another third is appropriated to meet the expenses of divine service, and the rest absolutely free to the inhabitants of the districts.

1696. What are the current expenses in Lancashire in town districts?—I should say from 2*s.* 6*d.* to 6*s.* per sitting on the rentable pews only.

1697. For a thousand people eight hundred half-crowns would be 100*l.*?—Yes.

1698. Do you think that 100*l.* or 130*l.* would be the least expense that in a church of a thousand people would be incurred in the course of a year?—Not the least, certainly. In some country churches they manage with 1*s.* and 1*s.* 6*d.* rates.

1699. Do you imagine that it would be desirable to give to each of those districts attached to their several churches the power of levying rates for themselves, and exempting them from paying rates to the mother church to which the district originally belonged?—Judging from the experience of district churches I should say that it would be beneficial, due provision being first made for the sustentation of the mother church. We have some district churches able to assert their independence after twenty years. Then they have the power of levying their own rates, and in that way enlisting and securing the feelings of their more immediate neighbours.

1700. In such cases where they have become independent after twenty years connexion with the mother church have they been enabled to raise a church rate?—In most of them; churches of that character are not very numerous in Lancashire.

1701. What do you imagine to have been the principal cause of opposition to the church rate in Lancashire?—Chiefly the fact of the inhabitants of chapelry districts and other subdivisions being obliged to pay rates to the mother church, having at the same time their own chapel to maintain.

1702. Was it not also from the unwillingness of the dissenters to support a church from which they did not derive any direct benefit?—I do not think that feeling is so extensive as is supposed. I judge from this fact, that dissenters very willingly, I do not say universally, pay to the rate when they know that it is a rate appropriated to a church

or

or chapel in their own district. I know districts where parties have to pay to three several churches or chapels, and receiving benefit from none of the three; they are too ar off to be of any use to them.

1703. What is the general system in Lancashire as to the management of a parish. Have you open vestries, or close vestries, or self-elected vestries?—We have almost an infinite variety of systems. In the south you speak of a parish as commensurate with a township maintaining its own poor, and having its own church. In the parish of Manchester we have nearly thirty such townships forming *One Parish*, and having only three churchwardens over those townships, the rest are sidesmen. In the south you would look upon them as simply hamlets, but we have all the officers in a parish in each of those townships except the parson. We have overseers of the poor, surveyors of the highways, and constables in each of those thirty places, so that it is only for the purposes of a church rate and the disbursing of that rate that we ever meet together as parishioners.

1704. With no parochial feeling?—Too much divided in interest to be unanimous.

1705. Would it be a simpler way of going to work in Manchester to make those thirty townships all parishes at once?—All the fifty districts are quasi parishes so far as spiritual and ecclesiastical matters are concerned.

1706. Do the townships generally agree in limits with the ecclesiastical districts?—Not invariably. We have districts consisting of parts of parishes, parts of counties, and even parts of dioceses.

1707. For ecclesiastical purposes you would have each of those districts complete and independent within itself?—Yes, for ecclesiastical purposes.

1708. Everything short of the poor rate?—Yes; I do not touch the question of church rate.

1709. You would include practically the church rate within the purposes which should be assigned to each ecclesiastical division?—I should think it right and convenient to have it so, but I confess that I can see no prospect of its being accomplished in the matter of church rates.

1710. What are the obstacles that you see to such an arrangement?—As much in the unwillingness of the Legislature to settle and define the liability as in anything.

1711. Should you expect considerable opposition from those who pay to the mother church, because of their losing a part of that which contributes to their church rates at present?—In many cases they would have a right to complain. Take an old parish church comparatively falling to decay, it would be unjust to leave the maintenance of that fabric solely to the population that might remain to the mother church after other districts were taken away.

1712. On the other hand, that church was built probably when no such population was around it as there is now, and if there had not been that growth of population it would have been supported by the original number?—It might have been if it had meanwhile sustained no injury as many have from injudicious and vain attempts to enlarge in proportion to increased population, or, again, it might have been if no such opposition as that which we are acquainted with had never sprung up. The way in which I apprehend it would work unequally would be this; you would have in chapelry districts a population attached to churches which were new, and you would not only exonerate them from the burden of a rate for the dilapidated mother church, but give them a new one which would require comparatively but little repair.

1713. Do not you think that some of the old churches will outlast some of the new ones?—All the new ones are not the most substantial I confess.

1714. You might get over that difficulty, might you not, by always fixing a certain period within which after a new church was built, the parties attached to that church should still contribute to the mother church?—My own plan would be redemption. Let a competent surveyor inspect the fabric of the mother church, and let him make his calculations what it would cost annually to keep it in sufficient repair; divide that among the several townships according to rateable value of each forming the parish, and let them redeem the charge at so many years purchase; let that form a fund for the repair of that fabric vested in Queen Anne's Bounty or the Ecclesiastical Commissioners, making the dividends payable to the churchwardens for the time being.

1715. For that purpose you must enable these new parishes to raise either a given sum to redeem this burden, or raise annually an income sufficient to pay for the capital required?—Yes, that has always struck me as most equitable to all parties.

1716. Would there not be a great local opposition?—There would be much discussion unquestionably. I would do the same with many of the receipts or outgoings of one sort or another connected with the parish, the parochial clergy and their incomes, and so I would deal with dues, Easter offerings, and such like.

1717. How would you proceed?—Take the parish of Bolton, or the chapelry of Colne, the ministers of which are almost entirely supported by dues and fees, small rent-charges, Easter offerings, and things of that kind. I would have each of the townships and districts comprising these parishes to redeem their proportion of the amount payable, and

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form a sinking fund; let that be placed in the hands of the Governors of Queen Anne's Bounty as trustees, and the dividends be paid half-yearly to the minister. That parish of Colne had in 1841 20,000 inhabitants, and say, 4,000 dwellings. The Easter offerings alone ought to make 80*l.* to 100*l.* I would call upon the parties, the present householders, or rather their landlords, to redeem that charge; it would not average above 6*d.* per family per annum. Redeem this at twenty years' purchase. In the case of every new building, after the first year of occupancy, the owner should pay down twenty times 6*d.*, that is 10*s.* This would never be felt. Form a sinking fund for the Easter offerings, &c., as in the other cases.

1718. What effect have the double fees upon marriages in those new churches in Colne? —Bringing the people to be married at Colne, rather than the district church. Hence the amount of fees taken in the new churches is not so great as the incumbents of those supposed they would be before the privilege was granted to them. I should say not 5*l.* per annum to each on an average.

1719. Owing to the parties preferring to go to the mother church?—Yes.

1720. Not only preferring but paying double dues?—No; never paying double dues to the mother church.

1721. If they had to go to the district churches they would have to pay additional fees, would they not?—In some cases they would, and in some not. Double fees alone do not induce them to go to the parish church. In my parish no portion of the dues received at the district churches is paid to the mother church; yet the great majority leave the district churches at home, and claim the right of marrying at the church of their forefathers. The consequence is, that with a population remaining to my parish church of 5,000 people we have upwards of 500 marriages a year.

1722. From the desire of secrecy?—Yes; that, no doubt, in part; or making a holiday of the occasion.

1723. Are there any other facts you would desire to state in connexion with this inquiry?—I have sometimes felt disposed to draw up a statement of my views as to the division of parishes, the number of churches required, the expense of erecting them, and the means to be provided for endowing them. I could point out the places where I conceive churches would be required, and the amount of population to be assigned to each. In May 1843 the Bishop of Chester put the question to me, where churches were required? I then made out a list of the places, and I should say in three-fourths of them churches have been built since that time.

1724. Have you many instances of church building in excess?—I do not know a single case where it can be said that a useless or supernumerary church had been built, although more churches have been erected within the last twenty years than were built in the previous century. Our population increased forty-six per cent. from the year 1828 to the year 1847; our church accommodation in that time increased fifty-six per cent.

1725. Sometimes three are built where two would have been better?—I do not know that we have a case of that kind; I only know of one old congregation that can be said to have suffered diminution in the number of worshippers, communicants, or scholars, from the erection of a new church in its vicinity; and do not know a single case of a parochial clergyman who was at first either opposed to or lukewarm in the division of his parish, and the erection of an additional church near him, who will not now come forward, and acknowledge that the erection of every new church around him has added to his congregation, to his church collections, and to the support given to his charities and schools.

1726. Would you say that the parties doing that would have to encounter considerable opposition on the part of incumbents?—That would depend much upon the interference in matters of patronage and endowment. Our greatest difficulty in church extension is the patronage question. We first have to settle that, in dividing any of our parishes, and erecting new churches, before we can get the local authorities to work cordially with us.

1727. What are the difficulties that you find with regard to patronage?—Some of the incumbents of the mother churches are anxious to keep the patronage to themselves, whilst large contributors to building or endowment funds would vest it in trustees. Some few incumbents have secured the patronage to a considerable extent: one I know to the extent of securing all the new churches in his parish. Incumbents of some of our large parishes have considerable patronage.

1728. Do you believe that it is on the whole, in the long run, well to have the patronage of the new districts in the hands of the clergyman of the mother church?—I should myself so feel the responsibility of appointing to a church that I would rather not have much of it. I think great injustice was done to the Church under the late Act in transferring half the patronage of new districts to the Crown, for merely enabling the Church to redistribute her own property.

1729. Have you considered how far it would be desirable to vest the patronage in any individual in consideration of a liberal endowment?—I see no great disadvantage in allowing it, only guarding it by proper restrictions.

1730. There

Archdeacon Rushton.

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1730. There can be no doubt that it would induce large contributions?—No. I would in all cases vest the site of the church either in the Ecclesiastical Commissioners or the incumbent of the place. I have no idea of a set of trustees coming to me as the incumbent of my church, and saying, "That part of the grave-yard or wall is part of the trustees freehold.'

1731. If you had a poor church with 150*l.* a year only upon it, you would not see any objection if any gentleman said, "I should like to have that church; I will give you 3,000*l.* "if you will let me have the whole patronage?"—I rejoiced when the Ecclesiastical Commissioners established a precedent at Manchester of giving the patronage of a church to the five trustees who provided the means of building it, and endowing it with 50*l.* a year. I quoted that as a case in point when, in conversation with some wealthy manufacturers in our diocese, who were so satisfied with the arrangement, that they immediately came forward with 6,000*l.* to erect a church, a school, and parsonage; so that I conclude the patronage is often an influencing motive. I do not see any special evil arising from the exercise of that patronage, as the Church has the Bishop intervening to check improper appointments.

1732. Patronage of that kind has the advantage, has it not, of attaching sometimes a whole circle of connexions by peculiar personal ties to the church of a neighbourhood?—Yes, especially if taken up by the employers of large numbers of operatives. There are many cases of that kind in the dioceses of Chester and Manchester.

1733. Many of those modern churches are very meanly endowed, are they not?—All of them, I should say, are endowed with not less than 1,000*l.* or its equivalent, to begin with, and there are pew rents in addition.

1734. What do these pew rents generally amount to? You mentioned the case of a rich parish in Manchester where the income was 250*l.*?—I should say from 80*l.* to 150*l.* in the poorest cases.

1735. You would say practically that the incomes of the clergy of the recently built churches would range from 100*l.* to 200*l.* a year, 200*l.* being quite the excess?—No. We have some new churches that have received augmentations from private benevolence; cases in which 2,000*l.* or 3,000*l.* have been given to each church. I should say that our new churches would range in point of value from 80*l.* to 400*l.* a year.

1736. Do you find that there is a very rapid transition of incumbents through those churches?—Not to the extent that would be supposed. I have been quite astonished at the continued perseverance of many of the younger clergy, especially in the poorer districts.

1737. Are many of them obliged to have recourse to tuition to assist themselves in maintenance?—Very few comparatively. The wonder to me is how they do live with their limited incomes and sometimes large families. In my official capacity I am sometimes made the medium of conveying to the younger and poorer clergy very handsome sums from private individuals who have witnessed their zeal, their self-denying labours, and their exclusive devotion to their profession.

1738. There is no general fund to which the needy can apply for pecuniary aid?—None, beyond the old established society for the relief of clergymen's widows and orphans.

Rev. John Sneyd.

The Rev. JOHN SNEYD examined.

1739. Have you paid particular attention to the inconveniences arising from the patronage of churches being left in the hands of the populations of the respective parishes?—I have paid attention to the subject.

1740. And you have collected facts upon the subject, have you not?—I took a great deal of trouble a few years ago upon the subject, and I had communications with Sir Robert Peel, the Bishop of London, and a good number of gentlemen, who usually take different views upon such subjects; and it appeared to me, from the communications that I had with all the parties, that it might be possible to dispose of those differences. The great difficulty at that time seemed to consist in inducing the House of Commons to pay attention to any matter relating to the Church; party feeling then running high, and many subjects of a secular nature engrossing its attention.

1741. Do you know what the number of those cases is?—I think they are about 152 that are in the gift of freeholders, landholders, feoffees, proprietors, inhabitants, householders, parishioners, freeholders and inhabitants, and trustees. There are 152 cases altogether of that sort, and out of that 152 there are 101 without parsonage houses, showing how neglected those livings are that are in the gift of corporate bodies.

1742. When you say "trustees" do you mean that you have included large benefices in the hands of trustees in that number?—No. This is a list that I took several years ago (*producing the same*); it does not include all now; but the proportion of those not having glebe houses would be considerably increased since that time. I find, on looking over the clergy list to day, that I have excluded Simeon's trustees, and all those where the name is given for whom they are trustees.

1743. Such as Simeon, or some other name?—Yes.

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1744. You have made no restriction as to the number in looking at the trustee livings?—I have looked out all below five, including that number.

1745. You have included, as far as that period went, all livings in the hands of trustees where there were five or more trustees, except where the name of the founder was given?—Yes, unless where it was shown that they were trustees for particular persons.

1746. In Manchester and Lancashire, within a few years, large sums of money were raised to build churches, the patronage of which was to be vested in trustees; have you included them in that list?—No. This a list, I think, made out in 1833. My object was chiefly directed to livings in the gift of landowners, inhabitants, and freeholders; some are called freeholders and inhabitants; and I find that of freeholders, landowners, feoffees, and proprietors, there are twenty-nine livings, and eighteen of those have no parsonage houses. Those in the gift of larger bodies of persons, such as are designated inhabitants, householders, freeholders and inhabitants, and parishioners, are forty-seven, and thirty-seven out of that number have no parsonage houses. It appeared to me, that those parishes were most neglected that were in the gift of the largest bodies of persons. The question put to me by Sir Robert Peel was this, "How would you dispose of the proceeds of a living?" And from inquiry it appeared to me, that the patrons would dispose of a great many of those livings if they had the power to do so. My idea was, that if an Act of Parliament was passed, enabling a certain proportion of the patrons (say three-fourths of their body) to sell the livings to a college or to a private individual, and the proceeds to be disposed of, subject to the approbation of the bishop of the diocese, either to increase the income of the living if it be a poor one, the building of a parsonage house, the endowment of a school, or the liquidation of the church rates within the parish, (the generality of them are very poor, I do not think they amount to 100*l.* a year, taking the whole list together,)—if the patron did not approve of the proceeds being thus appropriated, it might appear more desirable to dispose of the money actually amongst them, sooner than retain so great a nuisance as many of those livings are.

1747. Have you evidence of facts connected with those livings, and the abuses arising from the system of election?—The living of Ipstones is in the gift of freeholders. When I offered myself, there were five who came forward; and having a good deal of influence there, I found no difficulty,—in fact I secured about 110 votes out of 120; and one candidate, I was told, promised the freeholders that if their choice should fall on him he would give up half the living. That, of course, was not a very proper transaction. In the case of Calton in the diocese if Lichfield, the patronage is in the inhabitants; and some years ago when the living was vacant several clergymen came forward, and the thing was decided at a public house. Bilston seems to be one of the worst cases that we have in Staffordshire, in the gift of 16,000 inhabitants. Willenhall is another case almost as bad.

1748. As long as this system continues, there will be a difficulty in getting the consent of such patrons to such divisions for the benefit of the parish?—The difficulty consists in this, in the case of being in the gift of freeholders. A part of the property, as in the case of Ipstones, belongs to other churches, and we could not get the consent of the persons having only a life interest. There are other lands belonging to schools, and others belonging to minors. I know this positively with respect to the living of Ipstones, that I could very easily purchase it if the parties had the power to sell it; but if I were to secure 100 votes out of 105, there would be five votes against one.

1749. In such a case how might the proceeds be appropriated?—At Ipstones there is no parsonage house, and I have no doubt that the majority of the patrons would consent to the building of a parsonage house, or the liquidation of the church rate, or the endowment of a school. I am quite satisfied in that case, that anything that the bishop of the diocese was anxious for would be consented to.

1750. Have you known cases where great evil has arisen in the way of canvassing?—There is no doubt of it. At Bilston it is quite notorious.

1751. And great expense incurred?—Yes, great expense; and more disgusting scenes have taken place there than at a general election for a member of Parliament.

1752. There is another district in your neighbourhood, called Lane End?—Lane End is in the gift of hereditary trustees; some of them, I have understood, are dissenters in the parish of Stoke-upon-Trent; and there is also Hanley in much the same predicament. At Hanley at this time a good number of clergymen, as many as fifty, I have understood, have preached on different Sundays to secure the living; and it very frequently is the case that the persons who have to elect are not the fittest persons to select a clergyman. It is better, in my opinion, in the hands of one person than in the hands of many. I had a communication with Dr. Lushington upon the subject, and he did not seem to raise any objection to my proposal of giving a certain proportion of the patrons permission to sell, whether they held their patronage as trustees exceeding five in number or otherwise. The obstacle I met with then was, the difficulty of introducing a Bill into the House of Commons for the benefit of the Church. Bilston has 16,000 inhabitants.

1753. Are they householders?—Inhabitant householders. All the householders have a vote, both men and women.

1754. One

1754. Only one can vote for each house?—Perhaps not. I know an instance where a woman did vote, and gave several votes for several houses; that was a prostitute at Bilston. If the whole good could not be obtained, a great deal might; and I think, in the course of time, that many of the different patrons would come to the conclusion that they might derive a greater advantage from the sale of their livings, than by retaining the patronage.

1755. What you propose is an Enabling Act, to give a certain proportion?—Yes. As it is at present, if a living falls vacant, I fancy that if the whole do not consent, it would lapse to the bishop in the course of six months; the bishop would then have the power of selecting the incumbent. If the whole do not consent now, it strikes me that the election would not be good.

1756. Would not a majority carry the election?—No, not if there was an opposition to the thing. I think the bishop would, generally speaking, take the majority; but it would be a question of law whether a majority would be sufficient if opposed by the minority. A majority cannot sell a living.

1757. In the case of the freeholders in Ipstones, or elsewhere, where the church is possessed by the freeholders, it would be very easy to divide an acre of land amongst any number of persons, and any one of those might vote?—I think that a certain number of patrons would consent to a power being given to a certain proportion, that certain proportion being ascertained by a vestry being called by the churchwardens in the parish.

1758. Have you a list of all such cases?—Yes, up to a certain time. I have turned my attention to the cases of churches such as Leek, where there are a good many townships or chapelries.

1759. Have you at Leek a large parish with several chapelries depending upon it?—Yes. Formerly it was a much larger parish, and two or three other parishes that are now separate parishes belonged to Leek, and we do not know how they became parishes; and it becomes a question, whether the same course might not be adopted now as has been adopted before. Cheddleton and Horton and Ipstones were all included within the parish of Leek originally; they are now separate parishes. Since then the parish has been subdivided into chapelries, and in one of those chapelries we are not able to obtain any chapel rates to sustain the chapel: and that has arisen entirely from this; because the rates for the repair of the chapel were raised out of the poor rates originally; and so small a sum having been required, that when the poor rate was collected they took into consideration what was required for the repair of the chapel, and that sum was obtained. But since the Poor Law Act came into operation we cannot go to the poor rates for any assistance of the kind, consequently there is no means now of repairing the chapel excepting by voluntary subscription, though a great proportion of the population of that chapelry would be very glad indeed to keep the chapel in repair, if they could be freed from the repair of the mother church.

1760. Are all those dependent chapelries of Leek liable to the repair of the mother church?—Yes.

1761. And they have to repair their own church besides?—Yes, with the exception of Omcote, which, unfortunately, obtained its assistance from the poor rate. We cannot prove that a chapel rate was ever collected in that chapelry.

1762. In the other cases a double rate is raised?—Yes.

1763. Which causes considerable dissatisfaction?—Yes; so great that I am perfectly satisfied that I could myself stop the rates of Leek.

1764. And the outlying chapelries of Leek could stop the repairs of the mother church?—Yes, and would do so with the slightest encouragement. With respect to Stoke-upon-Trent, originally it was very much larger than it is now, and the parishes that were first divided from it can support their own church. The people are satisfied to repair their own church; but now the mother church of Stoke has other chapelries taken from it, and those chapelries vote against the mother church; they prevent any rate being collected for the repair of the mother church.

1765. Under what law were those first chapelries exempted from the repair of the mother church, and enabled to repair their own?—By Act of Parliament; but how the different parishes of Cheddleton and Horton and Ipstones got divided from Leek we cannot ascertain, though it is very clear that they formed an original part of that large parish. By the first Church Building Act I think the intention was,—because it states "built or to be built," and it struck me that churches built must refer to churches that had been built previously to the passing of the Act,—that those churches, if they should maintain their own chapels or churches for twenty years, would then be free from the repair of the mother church.

1766. To what Act do you refer?—I refer to the fifty-eighth of George the Third.

Adjourned.

Tuesday, 17th July 1849.

ARCHDEACON SINCLAIR in the chair.

Mr. John Morley.

17th July 1849.

Mr. JOHN MORLEY examined.

1767. You are one of the churchwardens of Manchester?—Yes.

1768. What is the amount of the population now connected with the church of Manchester?—The parish we suppose to contain about 420,000; by the last census it was 353,387.

1769. What other churches or chapels are contained in that district?—The parish of Manchester contains fifty-four churches and chapels.

1770. How many of those have any district assigned to them?—Most of them have a district assigned to them. All, except three.

1771. In what way is a district assigned?—An Order in Council assigned twenty-three districts in 1839, and another Order in Council assigned other districts, in and to which I would draw the attention of the Commissioners. I have brought with me the *London Gazette* containing an Order in Council of 1839.

1772. Those were assigned by the Church Commissioners under the Church Building Acts?—Exactly. By these Orders in Council the rectors of the parish get rid of the cure of souls, but still retain the fees for their chaplains, &c., and also all the revenues arising from the tithes and glebe lands.

1773. And the incumbents of those churches have now the sole spiritual jurisdiction within those districts?—It is difficult for me to say that, inasmuch as this, that the clergy of the cathedral and parish church baptize and marry all who come, all over the parish.

1774. But the incumbents of those parishes are enabled to have marriages and baptisms in their several districts, are they not?—Under certain restrictions; that is, in many cases double fees are required of them when they so marry or baptize.

1775. Is that in perpetuity?—I believe so.

1776. Will the double fees be required in perpetuity at the collegiate church?—I believe so; but that is a question I cannot exactly answer. They have power to enforce the payment in perpetuity.

1777. Is there any fee for baptism?—There is.

1778. For baptism or for registration?—If you will refer to the Order in Council it gave the fee for baptism; it says nothing about registration; it reserves a fee of 6*d.* for baptism to the chaplains and clerks of the collegiate parish church. I think there are ten exceptions. I believe the charge in the district churches is 1*s.* for baptisms. The people consider it is for baptism.

1779. Sixpence of which goes to the collegiate churches?—Yes, and 6*d.* to the minister of the district church, unless he, as many do, forego his claim.

1780. Is it your opinion that the impression is throughout the whole parish that the parishioners have a right to marry at the collegiate church?—Yes; Saint John's and Saint Mary's have the like privilege.

1781. What population remains to the mother church after you have deducted all the population in the several districts that you have mentioned?—As far as I am able to state, something like 18,000 or 20,000.

1782. Not more?—No it is difficult to say, for those divisions are ill-defined.

1783. How many banns of marriage on any given Sunday are published in the collegiate church?—In 1848 for the first seven months they average 180, and they vary from 124 up to 312.

1784. Do you consider that to be very much beyond the mark for the population?—Certainly, beyond the mark for the population of the district, because we have it in evidence that they came from all parts; they come for many miles; from Heaton Norris, a suburb of Stockport, from Denton, from Gorton, and from various distant parts of the parish to be married.

1785. Are many married in the registers office besides?—Yes, I believe a considerable number, besides those married at dissenting chapels.

1786. They generally marry on Sunday in the collegiate church for the most part, do they not?—Yes.

1787. How many marriages have you on a Sunday?—Sometimes as many as sixty.

1788. I presume the Commissioners are to understand when you say from 124 to 312 with reference to banns, you only mean for a single time?—The gross number of banns published on the 2d of January 1848, was 124.

1789. Taking

1789. Taking all the three times?—Yes. The next would be, on the 9th of January, 143; April the 2d, 179; April the 9th, 181; May the 7th, 174; May the 14th, 206; and May the 21st, 256.

1790. What proportion does this number bear to the number, say, fifteen years ago?—I have no means of stating; I think they were much larger; I find the aggregate number of marriages that took place in 1835 was 3, 610.

1791. In last year what was the number?—Last year 3,221, and in the previous year, 1847, 2,844.

1792. Can you state to the Commissioners the number of baptisms?—In 1847, 4,269; in 1848, 4,652; and from the 1st of January this year to the 24th of June, 2,208.

1793. Where were those baptisms generally solemnized?—In one of the chapels of the parish church,—in the Derby Chapel, purchased some years ago by the parish for a baptistry.

1794. At what time?—After the afternoon service.

1795. Is the whole ceremony properly gone through?—No, it is anything but solemnly performed on account of the numbers. The clergy used their best endeavours, and we have four apparitors present to preserve order.

1796. How are the fees paid, and when are they demanded?—The sacrament of baptism is administered on Sunday after the evening service, and usually commences about 5.30. The mothers with their infants are admitted into the Derby Chapel adjoining the chancel; those having male children are placed on one side, and those with females on the other, the sponsors standing behind. The service is read by one of the officiating ministers present; the responses are made by the clerk and a few of the sponsors in the immediate vicinity of the clergyman. The ceremony of baptising then begins; one minister takes the boys, and another the girls; but before the conclusion of the words that are repeated to all there exists a scene of confusion and noise not consistent with so solemn an ordinance. The children crying and the mothers in vain endeavouring to appease them; some talking, others walking, notwithstanding the efforts of four apparitors. It ought to be stated that prior to the baptismal service, and during the general service, many of the parents and sponsors resort to a public house adjoining the church, where they may be seen drinking and smoking; those who are unable to write out in proper form the paper required to be given to the clerk for registration are here furnished with a form, in consideration of the parties paying a small sum of money or taking a glass of liquor. The writer was shocked to witness these scenes on Sunday last at the Black Boy public house, whither he resorted with one of his colleagues. Some of the men who stated they were about to become sponsors were under the influence of the drink they had taken. In the parish of Preston no fee has been taken for the last twenty years for baptisms nor registration thereof.

1797. That arises from the practice of going to the adjoining public house?—Exactly.

1798. What is the number of communicants in the parish church of Manchester?—On ordinary Sundays they vary from forty to 120.

1799. How many persons will the church accommodate?—It is said to accommodate 3,000 people, but that includes the chancel, which is separated from the church by a glass screen.

1800. What is the congregation?—From fifteen to eighteen hundred assemble on the Sunday. I believe the clergy think more.

1801. Do you think it contains more than 3,500?—There are 3,000 sittings, but that must include the chancel. I think the body of the church would not contain more than 2,300, including the galleries, which are deep, and hold a very large number.

1802. Is the Lord's Supper administered every Sunday?—Twice a month it is administered.

1803. What is the average in each instance?—From forty to 120. We have a book in which we put the numbers every Sunday it is administered.

1804. Can you state the number on Easter Sunday?—240 in 1847, 184 in 1848, and 235 in the present year.

1805. How is the parish clerk of Manchester appointed?—He is appointed by Sir Thomas de Trafford, a Roman Catholic gentleman, who lives in the neighbourhood of Manchester.

1806. By what right does he nominate?—I cannot speak positively. I think I have understood that in an early period his family built the chapel which now forms one of the side aisles of the church, and in consequence of undertaking to keep that chapel in repair, and that chapel being already used for parochial purposes, he was allowed to appoint the parish clerk. By the way he receives rents for the pews in that chapel.

1807. Is the clerk he appoints a clerk in orders or not?—No, he is a layman.

1808. Then there are two clerks?—Yes, there is a clerk in orders as well.

1809. Who performs the duties of the lay clerk?—A deputy; in fact there are two deputies.

Mr. John Morley.

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1810. You are positive that pew-rents are paid for seats in the Trafford chapel?—Yes. He, Sir Thomas de Trafford, has maintained that portion of the church which he considers his.

1811. What is the salary of the clerk?—It is impossible to say.

1812. How is it paid?—Chiefly by fees.

1813. Are there any fees paid in the collegiate church for the sacrament of Baptism?—6*d.* for each.

1814. Among whom are the fees divided?—3*d.* is paid to the chaplains, 1½*d.* to the clerk in orders, and 1½*d.* to the parish clerk.

1815. What is the marriage fee?—4*s.* 6*d.* for banns.

1816. And what for licence?—I do not know. The marriages in the district churches are very trifling.

1817. To what do you ascribe that, to the larger fee, or do you ascribe it to a preference in the minds of the people for the ancient church?—To the larger fee.

1818. Is that feeling generally entertained, not merely by the clergy, but by the parishioners in Manchester?—With regard to the fee?

1819. Yes?—Yes; the fee is most important to working-people.

1820. Is there any feeling on the part of the lower orders of preference for the parish church?—I am tolerably well acquainted with them; I have lived amongst them for twenty or thirty years, and I do not think there is.

1821. How many burials have taken place in the parish burial ground?—We have none; it has been sold.

1822. When was it sold?—The ancient cemetery around the cathedral parish church has been disused for interments since 1819. About 1815 a portion of land called Walker's Croft, nearly two acres, was purchased by the churchwardens for the parish burial ground. In 1842 and 1846 the Yorkshire and Lancashire railway company obtained power to purchase the land in question, that is, the Walker's Croft burial ground, for a station, and for purposes connected with the railway, for which they paid to the rector of the parish and the churchwardens upwards of 12,900*l.* This sum is now vested in the funds until a suitable plot of land shall be purchased for a cemetery. At present there is no ground in connexion with the parish church at which interments take place. The interest of the above-named sum of 12,900*l.* is paid to the parties who would have been entitled to the fees if interments had taken place, namely, to the clerk in orders two fifths, to the parish clerk two fifths, and to the chaplains one fifth, who are thus in receipt of an income from this source without performing any duty for it. The interments ceased to take place in Walker's Croft burial ground in February 1848 in consequence of an arrangement entered into between the clergy and the directors of the railway company.

1823. Have no steps been taken to purchase another burial ground?—When I entered on my office in 1848 my colleagues and myself were desirous of endeavouring to purchase another ground, but we found entered on the parish books a memorandum, which we considered prevented us taking any steps on the subject, to this effect, that the arrangement that had been entered into by the clergy and the railway company was of that nature that the money would not be forthcoming until the company began to use the ground. Some time prior to the last purchase they used the part they bought in 1842, but they have not touched that which was bought in 1846; that still remains unoccupied.

1824. Where do interments take place now?—When any parties apply at the church they are sent to the burial ground of Saint Michael's, the nearest church in the neighbourhood, but some take place in the cemeteries and some in the district churchyards. There are three cemeteries around Manchester chiefly in the hands of the dissenters; a portion of one of them has been consecrated.

1825. Is there anything further that you would wish to state to the Commissioners?—Nothing, except generally on the subject of the number who frequent the church for marriage and baptismal services.

1826. Is there any prospect of further subdivision taking place so as to relieve the parish church of some portion of that 20,000?—Not in the district, I should say, but in Manchester there are many other districts equally large as that around the parish church. I believe that Saint George's district has a larger population than that around the parish church.

1827. Is there any other place of worship within the limits of the parish church district?—None connected with the establishment. On ascertaining the boundary of the district I find there are four or five dissenting chapels, but no Roman Catholic one.

1828. You have one church for at least 20,000 people?—Yes.

1829. What are the services on the Sunday?—Two. In the morning at half past ten; in the afternoon at half past three. In the summer months there is an early morning service when the litany is read and a sermon preached by one of the chaplains.

1830. Could there be an evening service established?—There might be, as we have gas in the church.

1831. Who performs the duty of visiting the sick and other pastoral work in that parish?—The chaplains in the district around the parish church.

1832. Not the canons or the rectors of the parish?—No, they do not consider that they have the cure of souls.

1833. How many chaplains are there?—Two and one clerk in orders.

1834. Those three have the spiritual charge of the 20,000 people connected with the parish church?—Exactly.

1835. Are there a great many dissenters within those limits or Roman Catholics?—It is impossible to say. I should say that there are a great many of both. Families of almost every or of no creed.

1836. Are there Roman Catholic chapels and dissenting chapels within the same limits?—Within that district.

1837. Or supplying the people of that district?—There are near the district; I cannot say whether there are any within the district.

1838. You do not know whether there are any great masses of those 20,000 who are decidedly of another persuasion?—It is impossible to say; it is the ancient part of Manchester; round the parish church.

1839. Not much inhabited by the poorer Irish?—No; they inhabit other districts round Saint Michael's, Saint George's, and Saint Simon's and Saint Jude's churches.

1840. Is it your impression that of those 20,000 those who are not supplied by the Church are not supplied by any other means?—Not in their immediate locality.

1841. They are not looked after by ministers of other persuasions?—I think not. The Town Mission are active in their endeavours to promote the good of all.

1842. Are there any ascertained facts with reference to the property belonging to that mother church?—It is known that the extent of the glebe land is 1,200 acres, and it can only be judged of by the value of other land in a similar situation in and around the town.

1843. Has there been anything like a surveyor's estimate coming with any authority as to the whole of the property belonging to that church?—No. If the lands were let in the same manner that other property is let in that neighbourhood there is no doubt that they would yield a very considerable increase of revenue.

1844. Has the Dean of Manchester any residence?—In Salford he has.

1845. An official residence?—One he rents from year to year.

1846. Not an official residence?—No. I believe he has taken it on lease.

1847. Is there no residence attached to the deanery fit for use?—No. The ancient residence of the warden is still in existence, a low building in Dean's Gate, which is, I think, now divided into two shops or dwelling houses, &c.

1848. Are there residences for the other four rectors and canons in the parish?—There are three. The fourth has been sold to the Improvement Commissioners, pulled down, and the proceeds invested in the funds.

1849. Do not the rectors then reside?—Not in the district. They reside, two of the canons, about two miles from the church, another four miles, and the fourth is non-resident. He, Canon Parkinson, is the principal of St. Bees, and incumbent of that parish. The dean resides in Salford, about one mile from the church.

1850. Do the rectors perform any part of the spiritual duties of the parish?—Nothing beyond the Sunday service of reading prayers and preaching, agreeably to the requirements of the charter. When in residence they take part in the daily service when prescribed by the charter.

1851. Do they take no part in the pastoral superintendence?—Not any.

1852. When Manchester was constituted a bishoprick, was not the collegiate church placed on the same footing as other cathedral churches, where the canons are liable to no other duties than residence during certain months? Have you any knowledge whether any change has taken place in the constitution of the collegiate church?—I am not aware. I believe the clergy consider that they are liable to the same requirements by the parishioners as before.

1853. In fact the change of condition from a college to a bishoprick had not altered their legal position in regard to their duties in the parish?—Not at all. I believe they state that themselves.

1854. Whatever they were before they are now?—Yes.

1855. The difference of opinion is as to what they were before?—Yes.

1856. That is simply in reference to the privileges, not in reference to duties. In reference to duties, do not they claim to stand on the same footing as other cathedrals?—I do not think that they are agreed upon that point among themselves, inasmuch as one of the canons has accepted since 1840 the living of St. Bees, the principalship of that college, solely on the ground of his privilege as a canon.

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1857. He claims exemption from residence on that ground?—I have understood so.

1858. On the ground of the Act which constituted Manchester a bishoprick?—Yes, and he being a canon.

1859. Are both the chaplains resident in the parish, having the spiritual duties of the parish committed to them?—One is resident, and the duty of the other is performed by deputy.

1860. How long has that arrangement existed?—For many years.

1861. Has not this unhappy controversy in Manchester considerably affected the position of the Church, and the willingness of the laity to assist in building new churches and raising new endowments?—For many years past I have heard this opinion expressed amongst my fellow townsmen that they would not give anything till the church property of Manchester was fairly brought into operation; this is not recent. I could quote many instances of influential men objecting to contribute money for either of the above purposes.

1862. Do you believe that it is a very widely spread feeling?—Yes, undoubtedly, and it has gone so far that people will not pay the church rates.

1863. Have you any church rate?—Yes, an optional one; when the optional one was first laid I think it amounted to 1,200*l.* paid by all parties. Last year it did not yield anything like that amount. The last legal rate was laid in 1834; it was a penny in the pound, and yielded 1,442*l.* The proportion paid by the township of Manchester was 852*l.*, and the gross amount collected in 1835 by being the first year of the optional rate was 1,282*l.* The amount collected for the year ending Easter 1849 was 789*l.* A penny in the pound on the whole parish of Manchester would yield 4,000*l.*

1864. Do you think there would be any difficulty in obtaining rates for the several district churches on the part of the parishioners resident within the boundaries of the districts?—Yes, I think there would on the part of the dissenters; the dissenters have built handsome places of worship of their own, and they object to pay a church rate.

Wednesday, 25th July 1849.

The BISHOP OF LONDON in the Chair.

Archdeacon Sinclair.

25th July 1849.

The Venerable Archdeacon SINCLAIR, a Member of the Commission, examined.

1865. What is the number of ecclesiastical districts in the parish of Kensington?—Five.

1866. What is the number of charities?—About twenty-one.

1867. By whom are they managed and distributed?—Some by the vicar and churchwardens; some by the vicar, churchwardens, and overseers of the poor; and others by private individuals holding the trust under the will of the donors.

1868. Have any steps been taken to apportion the charities under the Act 8 & 9 Vict. c. 70?—Application was made by the ecclesiastical districts to the Court of Chancery for a general apportionment of the parochial bequests. A hope appears to have been entertained that the parties interested would be able to agree upon a scheme which might be submitted to the Vice Chancellor, and confirmed by him without much expense.

1869. Was this hope realized?—No; for it was necessary that all parties should concur in the scheme, but they were numerous, and held conflicting opinions; and the question, what charities were liable to apportionment, involved many difficult points of law.

1870. How?—Either because a doubt arose whether the charity was, strictly speaking, *parochial*, as it was bequeathed for the benefit of the *town* and parish of Kensington; and part of the town is situated in the parish of St. Margaret Westminster; or, because the property in question belonged to the rate-payers, and was applied under a local Act in aid of the poor's rate; or, because the charity was not left in trust to the parish authorities, but to private individuals, who considered it their duty to support the will of the donor; or, because the charity was bequeathed for the use of a particular school; or, because the charity would be seriously injured or reduced to utter insignificance by division; or, because the property had been granted by the churchwardens and overseers, with the consent of the vestry and poor law board, for the site of a school under the provisions of the School Site Act; or, because the charity had been left in trust to the vicar and churchwardens of the parish subsequently to the separation of some of the districts. A question also arose, whether each bequest must of necessity be divided into five parts, so that each district should have its portion, or whether, to prevent minute subdivision, certain charities might not be alienated entirely from the mother church, and divided among the districts.

1871. Sup-

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1871. Supposing the Vice Chancellor to have removed all these doubts, and to have decided what charities were subject to apportionment, would any further difficulties have arisen in drawing up a scheme for the approval of the Court?—Yes. I heard it asked, By what rule is the portion of each district to be settled? Is no claim to be considered but that of population? Is the number of poor in each district to be disregarded? Is no account to be taken of a probable advancement or decline either in wealth or numbers?

1872. In what state are the Kensington charities now?—They are in the master's office. He has been required to determine what charities come within the meaning of the Act, and to draw up a scheme of apportionment.

1873. Do you think that this result could not have been averted?—No; there was a general wish to avoid needless litigation, and the vicar and churchwardens were ready to concur in an apportionment of the charities at their disposal; but it could not be expected that all the parties interested should agree upon any scheme. And I am apprehensive that if the law is suffered to continue in its present state, and is applied generally throughout the kingdom, many charities will be consumed in law expenses, much jealousy and dissension in parishes will be excited, and great scandal brought upon the Church.

Friday, 3d August 1849.

The ARCHDEACON SINCLAIR in the Chair.

The Rev. JOHN BURNET, LL.D., examined.

Rev. J. Burnet, L L.D.

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1874. YOU are Vicar of Bradford?—I am.

1875. What is the population of Bradford?—I should think it is now about 120,000.

1876. How many ecclesiastical divisions are there in the whole of Bradford?—There are nineteen churches.

1877. How many of those have districts assigned to them?—They have almost all districts assigned to them; at least, conventionally.

1878. Can you state how many have districts assigned to them, either by the Church Building Commissioners or by the bishop of the diocese?—I think the Commissioners will find an answer to that question at large in the return that I have made.

1879. What population remains to the mother church?—I should think about 40,000. I think that is a low calculation. I entered into that subject very minutely, for the purpose of answering the questions of the Pastoral Aid Society. The fact is, as far as the town is concerned, that wherever a district is not assigned, either conventionally or otherwise, the parties are always thrown on the mother church. I have had myself to go very considerable distances, for instance, to baptize children.

1880. What provision is there for the 40,000?—That arises from the mother church having the assistance of curates from the Pastoral Aid Society. We have two or three out-schools which are licensed, where curates officiate. I have four curates who are kept by the Pastoral Aid Society.

1881. How many licensed school-rooms are there?—There are five connected with the parish church.

1882. Is the service well attended by the poor?—My impression on that subject is, that Sir Robert Peel's plan of commencing by building a school does not act well with us. I would certainly prefer building the church first. This is the result of my experience in Yorkshire. We cannot get good congregations at the schools, and yet, in the same place, as soon as a church is built, we do get good congregations. It has been often thought that the congregation of a school is a nucleus for the congregation of a church; but it does not work satisfactorily where I am.

1883. To what cause do you ascribe that?—I ascribe it to the existence of so many dissenting chapels. Attending them looks more like going to a place of worship than going to the school-rooms. In Eccleshill, where we had a school for some years, and where a congregation could not be got together, there is now an excellent congregation since the church has been opened, although the same clergyman is working there, and by the same exertions formerly he could not bring them to the school.

1884. Are the churches generally well attended throughout the district?—I cannot say that they are.

1885. Of course you do not expect the middle classes to attend the schoolrooms as much as the poorer classes?—No.

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1886. In regard to the poor, do you find that they have the same objection that the middle classes have to attend divine service in a schoolroom?—I think they have more.

1887. Does your observation apply to any licensed building as well as to a school; to anything short of a church?—We have no licensed buildings except schools. In what I have said the Commissioners will bear in mind that I speak only from my own experience, and my experience is only that of two years. It is quite contrary to what I would have anticipated; but the fact is certainly so in my parish.

1888. What provision have you for the education of the poor, with reference to the 40,000 under your immediate charge?—Very good indeed. We have four large national schools, which are all in connexion with the government. One of them was built by the National Society as a model school.

1889. How many children do you suppose attend those schools?—In the day schools there are considerably more than 1,000 children.

1890. Out of the 40,000?—Yes.

1891. How many additional scholars are there, do you suppose, on a Sunday?—I should suppose 2,000; but I would rather send the Commissioners the particulars.

1892. You would not consider provision for 1,000 a good or sufficient provision out of 40,000?—No, I would not; but there are more than that, if I were to take the out-schools into the calculation.

1893. Would your schools contain a great many more children than 1,000 if they were filled?—Yes, they would.

1894. How many would they contain?—I suppose we have accommodation at the day schools for 1,500 children. Still we have the largest number in the day schools. No denomination approaches us in the number of our day children.

1895 Have you infant schools, exclusive of those day schools?—There is only one, which I have opened on my own responsibility within the last six weeks.

1896. What number attend it?—I have seventy in it. I took a house for the purpose. The want of infant schools is very great; but that is not confined to the Church of England; it is the case with almost all the other denominations; they are all deficient in that respect.

1897. Do you find that the children leave your day schools at an early age?—No; they cannot, if they are working in the factories; as long as they are half-timers they must continue. I would observe also that there are several of the factories in Bradford of which the proprietors prefer having their own schools within their own premises.

1898. In your district, how many do those factory schools contain?—I cannot say.

1899. Do you find any objection on the part of the poor to send their children to the national schools?—None whatsoever.

1900. How is it, if those schools would accommodate 2,000, that you have only one half the number?—I attribute it to this circumstance, that there are a great number of the parents of those children so poor that they do not send their children to the schools. I never saw a town with so many idle children in it.

1901. Are there many ragged schools in Bradford?—None.

1902. Do you think that the pay system excludes a number of children that otherwise would be brought into the schools?—Yes; if schools were provided gratuitously for the poor, I have no doubt that a great number of children could be got in.

1903. Is there a sufficient provision in the other districts as compared with the school accommodation of Bradford?—Not in Horton. I should remark, that the town of Bradford runs into four townships, and the greatest increase of population has taken place in the district of Horton, and the greatest deficiency of church and school accommodation is to be found there.

1904. Do you happen to know the number of children attending the churches or schools throughout the entire parish?—No, I do not.

1905. For the spiritual improvement of your district, your object would be to have an additional number of churches?—Certainly; and clergymen. The schools would follow them.

1906. What number of additional churches do you consider would be required in Bradford?—I think that the town of Bradford would require nine additional churches immediately.

1907. What might be the total accommodation in the existing churches now?—Supposing that we have about 120,000 inhabitants in the parish, we have accommodation for about 20,000. There are 100,000 that the church cannot reach. That is very near the mark indeed. Therefore we require those additional churches almost immediately.

1908. When you speak of the present attendance at the churches not being what you would wish, does that arise from the circumstance of dissent having obtained a strong hold upon the minds of the people, in the absence of church accommodation, or from any other causes?—I think partly from that. There are other causes, no doubt.

1909. Have you perceived any decided improvement among the people?—Yes, I think there is, decidedly. We were the very focus of chartist agitation; but I think it is now declining. The chartists themselves are more inclined to the Church than to any denomination of Dissenters; they seem to have more confidence in the Church, and they sent their children, when others did not, to the church schools.

1910. Is there a large amount of infidelity among the operative classes of the people?—I do not think there is, further than their godlessness. The socialists have long since been broken up. One of the greatest evils we have suffered from has been cheap publications and beer shops.

1911. Were those cheap publications of an infidel sort?—Yes; and of an immoral kind. There is one very infamous publication, which my lay assistant has been collecting some statistics about; upwards of 20,000 copies of it are sold on Saturday evenings from one shop in Bradford; it is called "The Town," and I had a calculation made of the sale.

1912. That has re-appeared of late?—Yes.

1913. How many districts are there in the parish of Bradford which have been constituted under Sir Robert Peel's Act?—The parishes of Denholme Gate, Manningham, and Oxenhope. The new parishes of Queen's Head in the parish of Halifax, and Cullingworth in the parish of Bingley, are taken partly out of my parish.

1914. In those districts how many churches are there now provided?—All our Peel districts will be, I hope, provided in the course of this summer, Oxenhope church is nearly complete; Denholme is completed and consecrated, and also Manningham.

1915. From the period of the constitution of those districts, have you had divine worship performed in some licensed places?—Yes, in licensed schools.

1916. You are aware that the Act provides for that; the building being licensed, and considered fit for the purpose?—Yes; we have in all cases availed ourselves of this provision.

1917. Although you find that those licensed buildings are not so well attended as the church; yet do you not consider it still a great object to have those buildings maintained?—Undoubtedly; but I say that from my experience I would rather build the church first.

1918. If you could?—Precisely.

1919. You are aware that planting a school was not a part of Sir Robert Peel's plan; it was a resource. The design of the Act was to plant a minister at once among a certain number of the population; to obtain the pastoral superintendence of a minister, although you could not provide a church, taking your chance of doing that afterwards; and the next step was to provide a licensed building for the temporary performance of divine worship in the absence of a church, which might be the means of establishing a congregation. Do you conceive that plan per se to work well?—Yes, certainly; but my object in making the observation was this, that, as far as my experience went, if it was left in my power, I would rather begin the other way, if I had the means. I hope that anything that may be done now will be complete.

1920. You are favourable to the entire subdivision of parishes, so that each church shall be independent of the mother church?—Yes; or, perhaps, there is another plan that might be taken into consideration. It may be doubtful whether a total subdivision would be so judicious as a subdivision leaving certain central places as mother churches, and the other districts depending upon them as they all do now upon the mother church. I believe that is the principle on which the parish of Halifax is to be subdivided. A private Act was obtained for it, and it will be divided into three parishes, I believe.

1921. That does not leave any one head for the whole?—It constitutes three heads instead of one.

1922. What relation would you wish to establish between the mother church and its dependencies?—I do not exactly know. I think it would be desirable that some acknowledgment of dependence, if even nominal, should be retained. I think it would, perhaps, remove obstacles and prejudices that lie in the minds of parties. I entertain none myself My own parish, for instance, is partly taken from the ancient Saxon parish of Dewsbury, and I have paid to Dewsbury parish 8s. a year by way of acknowledgment. With respect to subdivision, I think one of the most difficult matters will be the banns of marriage. I see very great practical difficulties there.

1923. In what way do you anticipate difficulties?—Suppose the town of Bradford were divided into distinct parishes for every purpose; here is a party living on one side of the street who wishes to be married to a party living on the other side of the street, and they live in distinct parishes, and the banns must be put up in both parishes, and then the parties would necessarily pay double fees.

1924. Is not that the case at the present time?—No; they go to the mother church and put up the banns, and they are married there. I took the liberty of suggesting, in the answers I gave to the queries proposed to me by the Commissioners, that I thought it might be very desirable that all banns should be put up at the mother church, no matter what subdivision of parishes took place, and that of itself would be an acknowledgment of the

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mother church; and, in the next place it would give the public an opportunity of preventing clandestine mariages; they would always know where to go to. At present they all come to inquire from the parish clerk, if they suspect their son or daughter. It is not merely the reading out, but the fact of there being one record in one place to which all can go, that is desirable.

1925. Do you not know that it is the custom for parties living in towns at a considerable distance to go to the parish church of Leeds and publish the banns there?—We are all continually imposed on; there is a perversity in the working classes that leads them from their own proper parish. The subdivision of parishes would give increased facilities for such irregularities. There is another point which of course would make us all act with very great delicacy; namely, the great facility of getting married by going to the registrar, which of course we wish to be discountenanced. The superintendant registrar could give the parties permission to be married within any place in his circuit that they choose to fix upon, and this of course makes us act with very great discretion.

1926. Are there many marriages by the registrar's certificate at the parish church?—No, there are not. Occasionally we have, and that is from parties who do not like their names to be read in the parish church; who cannot afford a licence, and, being church people, wish to be married in church.

1927. What is the average number of banns every Sunday?—They vary according to the times. We can tell good or bad times by the banns. Last Sunday I read out seventy-two myself. Sometimes they descend as low as thirty.

1928. Including the whole three Sundays?—Yes, including the three callings.

1929. Are there any churches in your parish where they have the power to celebrate marriages besides the parish church?—Yes; in almost all the churches. With the exception of the Peel districts, and of two churches under the Million Act. I receive fees for the occasional services in the churches. This leads me to mention another difficulty. The financial position of my parish is of this description, that when subdivided into separate parishes, and they all have their own fees, it will leave the vicarage of Bradford less than 200*l.* a year. The patrons of my parish had an Act drawn out on the plan of the Leeds Act, and this they found themselves unable to proceed with from this financial difficulty.

1930. What difficulty do you refer to?—The robbing of the mother church. There is scarcely any parish church that exercises such a sway over the subordinate churches on that account as mine.

1931. You would not object to make all these churches entirely independent, provided compensation were made to the vicarage of Bradford?—Certainly not.

1939. What number of marriages take place at once; on one day?—On Easter Sunday and Monday we married nearly sixty couple.

1933. Do not you think that marrying people in large numbers tends very greatly to diminish the seriousness and solemnity of the church service?—Yes, I think it does, and of that we take very great care. We commence between eight and nine o'clock in the morning. On such holidays as that we have always two or three clergymen in attendance.

1934. You consider that if any kind of compensation could be made it would be much more desirable that marriages should be spread over a larger space of time?—Yes. I conceive that to be one of the advantages of the system of subdivision.

1935. Supposing in such a town as Leeds, or Bradford, or Halifax, there should be one clergyman, a sort of permanent chairman or president of the whole, could that be done by an individual holding either the rank of rural dean or of archdeacon?—I have made a suggestion on that subject in my reply to your printed queries; and, I think, if you were able to carry out these things, there should be a greater number of assistants to the bishop; for instance, a great many things are brought before me by a sort of ceded right by the other clergy, and they seem quite content with any decision that I come to; and I have kept a great many things from the bishop in that manner, and have got them satisfactorily arranged by the clergy of my parish. We meet the first Thursday in every month.

1936. Where does the meeting take place?—In the vestry of the parish church. The patrons and my predecessor had drawn up the outlines of an Act of Parliament founded upon the Leeds Act, so conscious have we all been of the necessity of subdividing the parish, and that fell through for three or four reasons. In the first place, the means failed of remunerating the mother church; we thought it might have been recompensed by the sale of the vicarage ground (or at least they thought, for it was before my time); a calculation was made out that 10,000*l.* could be got for this vicarage ground; but, unfortunately, that was supposing that it could immediately be brought into the market, and supposing they could get the highest building-ground price; and, thirdly, another matter was overlooked, that a large portion of this was saddled with a lease having seven years to run; hence we were obliged to relinquish our object. Then there was another way of compensation, that would have been excessively unpopular and quite impracticable, and that was, that each of the out-districts anxious to become a district parish should remunerate the mother church in a gross sum for the fees. It was found that the public would give no money for such a purpose as that; there was no chance of raising it.

1937. How

1937. How is your church maintained ; by church rates ?—No ; we have no church rate. Our case was as long in litigation as the Braintree case, and it was set aside, after six or eight years of litigation, on a minor question ; the judges seemed very glad to get rid of it.

1938. Have you an open vestry or a select vestry ?—We have a vestry in the Easter week, for the appointment of churchwardens, and that is all the vestry that we have.

1939. Of which you are the ex-officio chairman ?—Yes ; I appoint one warden, and the people appoint the other.

1940. Have you found, in attending the vestry, that proper respect is paid to you and your office ?—Yes ; since they have discovered that I was not inclined to move in the church-rate question. The first time, when I was an untried man, many of the walls were placarded, the mills were let loose, and the church crowded and profaned ; and I was obliged to take the vestry into the churchyard. Our parish church is supported by a pew rate and by collections, and in order to effect this by a pew rate the churchwardens have united with me in endeavouring to abolish rents from our pews, and we have succeeded in a great degree ; we have only four or five obstinate cases. I have found cases in which some of the dissenters, who subscribed their money to fight against church rates, were actually receiving rent out of pews in the parish church. I stopped this, by putting a notice in the pews that no person had a right to receive rents for the pews in the parish church.

1941. Were those supposed to be faculty pews ?—No ; the faculty pews are only in the galleries, and those were on the floor of the church.

1942. Upon what ground was the rent collected ?—On various grounds. For instance, one party brought forward an instrument which had been drawn out by a solicitor only three or four years ago, giving a right to this pew because it was sold for 60*l.* Every sort of illegal practice has been carried on. At present my churchwardens are between 100*l.* and 200*l.* out of pocket for providing the decencies of divine worship.

1943. Is your pew rate optional or compulsory ?—I cannot make it compulsory. We have said to the parties, "You are to pay no rent, but we shall require you, according to a certain "scale, to subscribe for the services of the church." We do not find any great opposition to that.

1944. Would it not be much better if the pews were let for a certain sum, the expenses being paid out of it, and that every person taking a seat should pay for it in the ordinary way ?—Yes ; this I think will be our resource. It is not from predilection that I would have it. I would wish the floor of a parish church free.

1945. How many good seats have you, independently of free seats and children's seats, in the church ?—Our free seats are in the aisles. We can seat in pews about 1,500.

1946. Who might pay ?—Yes.

1947. Did you attempt anything in the bill you spoke of as to the pew rent ?—Nothing ; only so far as this, that all parties claiming pews, having a legal claim as connected with tenements in the parish, when a church was built in their district, must resign their claim to a pew in the mother church, which was then to become free. We have not room for all those who wish to come to the parish church now. We could fill the parish church with working people ; and I think in the subdivision of such a parish as mine it will eventually come to that. The parish church will be the church only of the poor people. All the respectable people live in the districts which I think will be supplied with churches, and the parish church will require the greater protection. Those who are monied people will be withdrawn from it, and it will become the church of the poor, and on that account wherever parish churches are so situated they ought to be tenderly dealt with and looked after. Like most other mother churches, mine is built in the midst of a poor population. If there were sittings for them, I am sure on Sunday evening 500 or 600 more poor people would attend church ; they often go away ; they cannot get accommodation.

1948. Is the church thrown open after the service has reached a certain point ?—Yes.

1949. All the pews ?—Yes ; there is not a lock on a pew in the church ; and in the parish church they will do what they are too proud to do in other churches. In district churches they will not sit in the aisles, and they will do it in the parish church ; it seems no disgrace there ; there is a feeling of that kind. I must also say, that in respect to most of our district churches I do not find that having a great number of free sittings is altogether so popular ; they like to pay some little.

1950. Are there seat rents in all the district churches ?—Yes ; they pay both pew rent and pew rate.

1951. Have you found persons coming from the outlying districts to the mother church, to obtain seats free, to avoid paying pew rents in their own districts ?—No ; I cannot point out a case of that kind.

1952. Reverting to what you have said as to the desirableness of there being some headship retained, in what way do you suppose it possible to retain that headship, and yet distinctly and independently divide a parish into different parishes ?—I would place some constituted officer as the first source of appeal, or a source of visitation, like what the rural deans are ; only that the rural dean's authority is merely conceded ; it is not recognized. I think it should be a legally constituted authority.

 1953. Something

Rev. J. Burnet, LLD.

3d August 1839.

1953. Something of that kind of office?—Yes; just to sift things before they went to the bishop, and not to overwhelm him.

1954. Are there in Bradford any endowments for parochial charities?—Yes.

1955. Of which the rector is ex-officio the distributor?—Yes.

1956. You think that presiding officially at vestries would not be sufficient to give that pre-eminence which you are of opinion it would be desirable to retain?—I merely spoke with reference to the additional labour devolving on the bishops. It is not for any dignity to be attached to the vicar of the parish, but there will be an overwhelming increase of correspondence when all clergymen come directly in contact with their bishop on all points. Any arrangement that would tend to obviate this, and to insure uniformity and harmony of action, would, I think, smooth down the objections existing in the minds of many adverse parties.

1957. Are there any double dues paid in the districts you are acquainted with?—Yes; there are double fees paid in the cases of ancient chapelries and by new churches, except as I have before specified. There is the ancient chapelry of Wibsey, a very ancient chapelry. There are now three additional churches in it, and Mr. Hardy hopes some day to have a fourth. Wibsey would serve as an instance of what I meant by subdividing the larger parishes, having a mother church in the centre, and the out-churches around it. The new churches might be chapels of ease under Wibsey.

1958. What population would you think it desirable to attach to your parish church; it is a very large church, is it not?—Yes. That would depend in some degree upon where the district churches would be settled. I would be inclined to attach a convenient population, a local population of about 8,000 to it; it would be quite competent for that.

1959. What is the population generally that you would attach to any of the new churches?—I should like to make it very low and very manageable. In Mr. Hardy's district, on mature deliberation, we put to each of his new churches 2,000.

1960. Will not the number increase?—Yes; the number will increase, but not very much. There are very few mills there; they are entirely iron works, and they are almost at the greatest height, and they will never be much more extensive than they are now. We thought that if a district of 2,000 was assigned it would be very manageable, and not drive the incumbent as a beggar to the Pastoral Aid Society. Then his church was built to hold about 450, with capability of enlargement.

1961. You know the feeling pretty well in Yorkshire as well as in Lancashire; do you think the people would be so likely to attend a small church capable of holding 450 persons as a church capable of holding 1,000 or 1,200?—Yes, I think they would.

1962. Do not you think that the feeling is very much in favour, judging by the dissenters, of a larger number gathering together?—It might be so in the very centre of the town; but there are two of the million churches in my parish, and at one of them I preached last Sunday week, at Shipley, and there was a large attendance of people in the churchyard, and they looked but a very miserable congregation in the church. There are 7,000 people in that district and neighbourhood, and yet they all seem to feel that the church is too large; the clergyman is worn out.

1963. How are those churches supported which have 2,000 annexed to them?—Those churches are being built. Mr. Hardy gave 6,000*l.* towards two churches, 5,000*l.* of which goes in endowment. He commenced with an endowment. He gave 500*l.* to each church as a nucleus for a building fund. All the out-churches in my parish are poor.

1964. Dependent upon pew rentals?—In some degree they all are.

1965. Is there any instance in which a competent income is derived from pew rents exclusively or chiefly?—There are two instances in Bradford, in the churches in the town. They have each a small endowment; the rest is made up from their pew rents; and they have good congregations.

1966. Then the position of those clergymen is preferable to that of most of the others in the town?—Yes; but I do not know whether the plan is a preferable one. That is another question. It so occurs that they are better off at present.

1967. I spoke only of ecclesiastical income?—So I understood you.

1968. In that respect they are better off?—Yes.

MINUTES OF EVIDENCE

TAKEN BEFORE THE

SUBDIVISION OF PARISHES COMMISSIONERS.

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